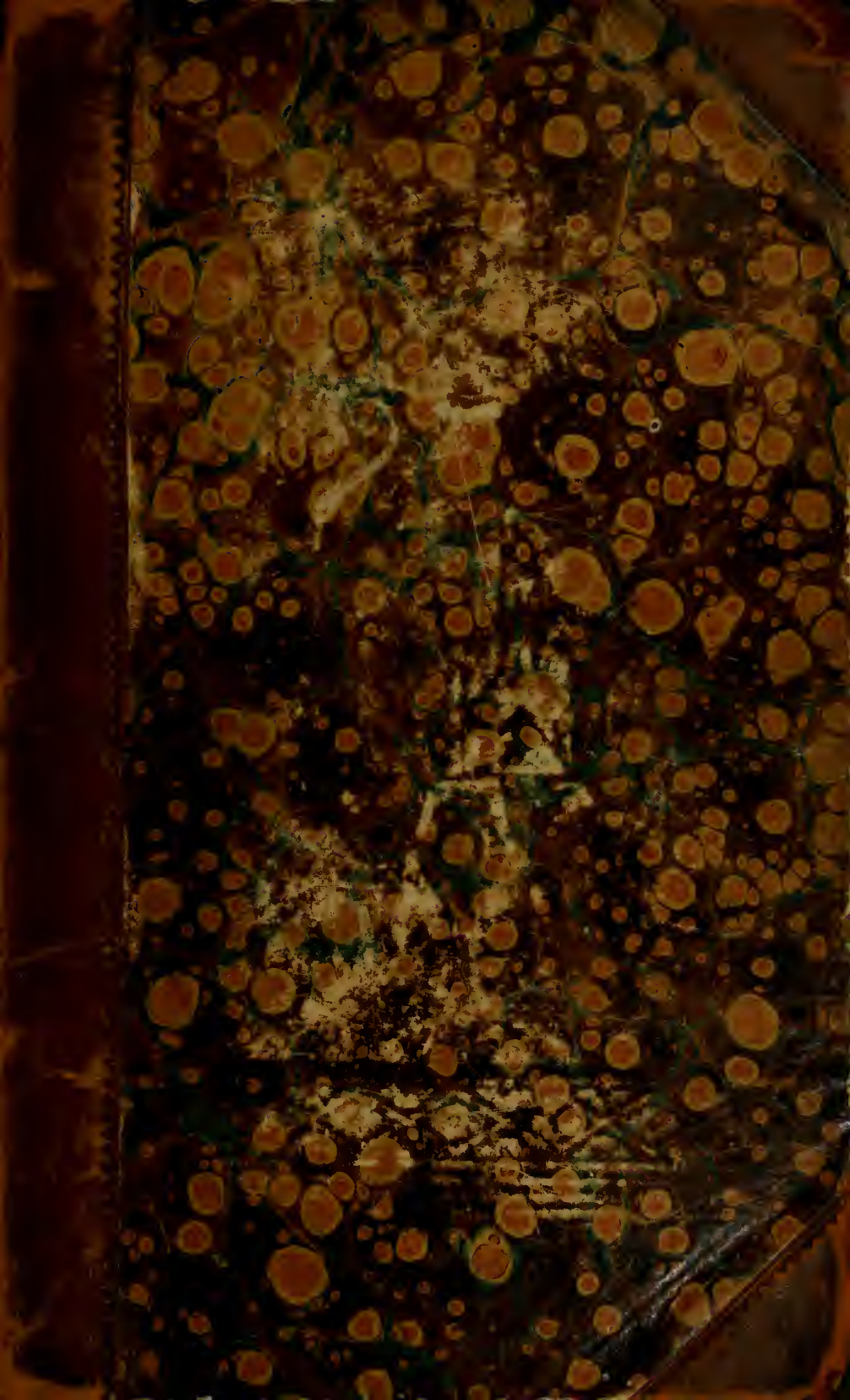

A. Weld delt. Neagle sculpt.

VIEW of the HORSE-SHOE FALL of NIAGARA

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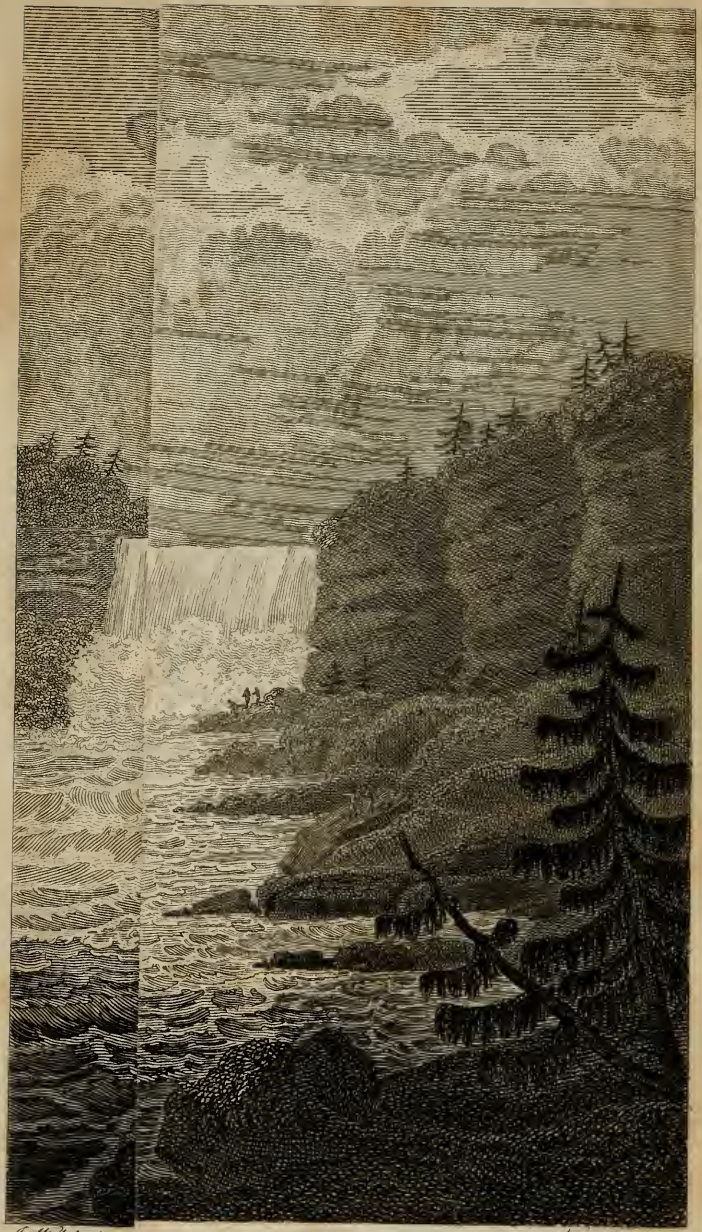

J. Weld delt.

Neagle sculpt.

TRAVELS

THROUGH THE STATES

OF

NORTH AMERICA,

AND THE

PROVINCES OF

UPPER AND LOWER CANADA,

DURING

THE YEARS 1795, 1796, AND 1797.

By ISAAC WELD, Junior.

SECOND EDITION.

ILLUSTRATED AND EMBELLISHED WITH SIXTEEN PLATES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TRAVELS

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Leave Quebec.—Convenience of Travelling between that City and Montreal.—Poſt Houſes.—Calaſkes.—Drivers.—Canadian Horſes very ſerviceable.—Salutations on arriving at different Poſt Houſes.—Beautiful Proſpects from the Road on the Top of the Banks of the St. Lawrence.—Female Peaſants.—Style of Farming in Canada.—Conſiderably improved of late.—Inactivity of Canadians in not clearing more Land.—Their Character contraſted with that of the People of the States.—Arrival at Trois Rivieres.—Deſcription of that Town and its Vicinity.—Viſit to the Convent of St. Urſule.—Manufactures of Birch-Bark.—Birch Canoes, how formed.—Leave Trois Rivieres, and reach Montreal.

Montreal, Auguſt.

HAVING remained in Quebec and the neighbourhood as long as we could, conſiſtently with the plan which we had formed

of viſiting the Falls of Niagara, and returning again into the States before the commencement of winter, we ſet out for Montreal by land.

In no part of North America can a traveller proceed ſo commodiouſly as along this road between Quebec and Montreal; a regular line of poſt houſes, at convenient diſtances from each other, being eſtabliſhed upon it, where calaſhes or carioles, according to the ſeaſon, are always kept in readineſs. Each poſtmaſter is obliged to have four calaſhes, and the ſame number of carioles; and beſides theſe, as many more are generally kept at each ſtage by perſons called aids-de-poſte, for which the poſt-maſter calls when his own happen to be engaged. The poſtmaſter has the excluſive privilege of furniſhing theſe carriages at every ſtage, and, under a penalty, he muſt have them ready in a quarter of an hour after they are demanded by a traveller, if it be day-light, and in half an hour ſhould it be in the night. The drivers are bound to take you on at the rate of two leagues an hour. The charge for a calaſh with a ſingle horſe is one ſhilling Halifax * currency per league; no gratuity is expected by the driver.

The

* According to Halifax currency, which is the eſtabliſhed currency of Lower Canada, the dollar paſſes for five ſhillings.

The

The poſt calaſhes are very clumſily built, but upon the whole we found them eaſy and agreeable carriages; they are certainly far ſuperior to the American ſtage waggons, in which, if perſons wiſh to travel with comfort, they ought always to ſet out provided with cuſhions for their hips and elbows, otherwiſe they cannot expect but to receive numberleſs contuſions before they get to the end of their journey.

The horſes in Canada are moſtly ſmall and heavy, but extremely ſerviceable, as is evident from thoſe employed for the poſt carriages being in general fat and very briſk on the road, notwithſtanding the poor fare and ill uſage they receive. They are ſeldom rubbed down; but as ſoon as they have performed their journey are turned into a field, and there left until the next traveller arrives, or till they are wanted to perform the work of the farm. This is contrary to the regulations of the poſt, according to which the horſes ſhould be kept in the ſtable, in perfect readineſs for travellers; however, I do not recollect that we were at

The ſilver coins current in Canada are dollars, halves, quarters, eighths, and ſixteenths of dollars, piſtareens, Spaniſh coins ſomewhat leſs valuable than quarter dollars, and French and Engliſh crowns and half crowns. Gold coins paſs only as bullion by weight. Britiſh and Portugal gold coins are deemed the beſt; next to them thoſe of Spain, then thoſe of France.

any place detained much beyond the quarter of an hour preſcribed, notwithſtanding that the people had frequently to ſend for their horſes, more than a mile, to the fields where they were employed. When the horſes happened to be at a diſtance, they were always brought home in a full gallop, in order to avoid complaints; they were yoked in an inſtant, and the driver ſet off at the rate of nine or ten miles an hour; a little money, indeed, generally induces them to exceed the eſtabliſhed rate; this, however, does not always anſwer, but play upon their vanity and you may make them go on at what rate you pleaſe, for they are the vaineſt people, perhaps, in the world. Commend their great dexterity in driving, and the excellence of the Canadian horſes, and it ſeldom fails to quicken your pace at leaſt two or three miles an hour; but if you wiſh to go in a gallop, you need only obſerve to your companion, ſo as to be overheard by the driver, that the Canadian calaſhes are the vileſt carriages on earth, and ſo heavy that you believe the people are afraid the horſes would fall down and break their necks if they attempted to make them go as faſt as in other countries; above all, praiſe the carriages and drivers of the United States. A few remarks of this ſort at once diſcompoſe the

tempers

tempers of the drivers, and their paſſion is conſtantly vented in laſhes on their horſes.

To haſten the ſpeed of their horſes they have three expreſſions, riſing above each other in a regular climax. The firſt, "Marche," is pronounced in the uſual tone of voice; "Marche-donc," the ſecond, is pronounced more haſtily and louder; if the horſe is dull enough not to comprehend this, then the "Marche-donc," accompanied with one of Sterne's magical words, comes out, in the third place, in a ſhrill piercing key, and a ſmart laſh of the whip follows. From the frequent uſe made by the drivers of theſe words, the calaſhes have received the nick-name of "marche-doncs."

The firſt poſt houſe is nine miles from Quebec, which our drivers, of their own accord, managed to reach in one hour. No ſooner were we in ſight of it, than the poſt-maſter, his wife in her cloſe French cap, and all the family, came running out to receive us. The foremoſt driver, a thin fellow of about ſix feet high, with a queue bound with eel ſkins that reached the whole way down his back, immediately cracked his whip, and having brought his calaſh to the door, with a great air he leapt out, bowed reſpectfully at a diſtance to the hoſteſs, then advancing with his hat off, paid her a few compliments, and

kiſſed both her cheeks in turn, which ſhe preſented to him with no ſmall condeſcenſion. Some minutes are generally ſpent thus at every poſt houſe in mutual congratulations on meeting, before the people ever think of getting a freſh carriage ready.

The road between Quebec and Montreal runs, for the moſt part, cloſe upon the banks of the River St. Lawrence, through thoſe beautiful little towns and villages ſeen to ſo much advantage from the water; and as the traveller paſſes along, he is entertained with proſpects, if poſſible, ſuperior to thoſe which ſtrike the attention in ſailing down the river.

For the firſt thirty or forty miles in the way from Quebec, the views are in particular extremely grand. The immenſe River St. Lawrence, more like a lake confined between ranges of mountains than a river, appears at one ſide rolling under your feet, and as you look down upon it from the top of the lofty banks, the largeſt merchant veſſels ſcarcely ſeem bigger than fiſhing boats; on the other ſide, ſteep mountains, ſkirted with foreſts, preſent themſelves to the view at a diſtance, whilſt, in the intermediate ſpace, is ſeen a rich country, beautifully diverſified with whitened cottages and glittering ſpires, with groves of trees and cultivated fields, watered by innumerable little ſtreams: groups of the peaſantry,

try, buſied as we paſſed along in getting in the harveſt, which was not quite over, diffuſed an air of cheerfulneſs and gaiety over the ſcene, and heightened all its charms.

The female French peaſants are in general, whilſt young, very pretty, and the neat ſimplicity of their dreſs in ſummer, which conſiſts moſtly of a blue or ſcarlet bodice without ſleeves, a petticoat of a different colour, and a ſtraw hat, makes them appear extremely intereſting; like the Indians, however, they loſe their beauty very prematurely, and it is to be attributed much to the ſame cauſe, namely, their laborious life, and being ſo much expoſed to the air, the indolent men ſuffering them to take a very active part in the management of the farms.

The ſtyle of farming amongſt the generality of the French Canadians has hitherto been very ſlovenly; manure has been but rarely uſed; the earth juſt lightly turned up with a plough, and without any other preparation the grain ſown; more than one half of the fields alſo have been left without any fences whatſoever, expoſed to the ravages of cattle. The people are beginning now, however, to be more induſtrious, and better farmers, owing to the increaſed demand for grain for exportation, and to the advice and encouragement given to them by the Engliſh merchants

at Quebec and Montreal, who ſend agents through the country to the farmers to buy up all the corn they can ſpare. The farmers are bound to have their corn ready by a certain day on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and bateaux are then ſent by the merchants to receive and convey it to the port where it is to be ſhipped,

All the ſettlements in Lower Canada lie contiguous to the River St. Lawrence: in no place perhaps do they extend farther back than twelve miles from it, except along the banks of the River St. Jean, the River des Prairies, and ſome other navigable ſtreams falling into the St. Lawrence. This is owing to the diſpoſition of the French Canadians, who, like the Germans, are fond of living near each other; nay more, as long as the farm of the father will admit of a diviſion, a ſhare of it is given to the ſons when they are grown up, and it is only when the farm is exceedingly ſmall, or the family numerous, that they ever think of taking up a piece of freſh land from the ſeignior. In this reſpect a wonderful difference appears between their conduct and that of the young people of the United States, particularly of thoſe of New England, who, as ſoon as they are grown up, immediately emigrate, and bury themſelves in the woods, where, perhaps, they are five or ſix

hundred mies diſtant from every relation upon earth: yet a ſpirit of enterprize is not wanting amongſt the Canadians; they eagerly come forward, when called upon, to traverſe the immenſe lakes in the weſtern regions; they laugh at the dreadful ſtorms on thoſe prodigious bodies of water; they work with indefatigable perſeverance at the oar and the pole in ſtemming the rapid currents of the rivers; nor do they complain, when, on theſe expeditions, they happen to be expoſed to the inclemency of the ſeaſons, or to the ſevereſt pangs of hunger. The ſpirit of the Canadian is excited by vanity; he delights in talking to his friends and relatives of the excurſions he has made to thoſe diſtant regions; and he glories in the perils which he has encountered: his vanity would not be gratified by chopping down trees and tilling the earth; he deems this therefore merely a ſecondary purſuit, and he ſets about it with reluctance: ſelf intereſt, on the contrary, it is that rouſes the citizen of the ſtates into action, and accordingly he haſtily emigrates to a diſtant part of the country, where he thinks land is in the moſt riſing ſtate, and where he hopes to be able the ſooneſt to gratify a paſſion to which he would readily make a ſacrifice of every ſocial tie, and of all that another man would hold dear.

On

On the ſecond day of our journey from Quebec to Montreal we reached Trois Rivieres, lying nearly midway between the two places. This town is ſituated on the banks of the St. Lawrence, cloſe to the mouth of the River St. Maurice, the largeſt of upwards of thirty that fall into the St. Lawrence, on the north-weſt ſide alone, between Quebec and Montreal. This river, before it unites with the St. Lawrence, is divided into three ſtreams by two large iſlands, ſo that to a perſon ſailing paſt its mouth it appears as if three diſtinct rivers diſembogued at the one ſpot; from hence it is that the town of Trois Rivieres receives its name.

The St. Maurice is not navigable for large veſſels, neither is it for ſloops more than a few miles above its mouth. In bateaus and canoes, however, it may be aſcended nearly to its ſource; from whence, if credit is to be given to the accounts of the Indians, the diſtance is not very great to the head of navigable rivers that fall into Hudſon's Bay; at a future day, therefore, if ever the dreary and inhoſpitable waſte through which it paſſes ſhall put on a different aſpect from what it now wears, and become the abode of human beings inſtead of wild beaſts, the St. Maurice may be eſteemed a river of the firſt importance in a commercial point of view; at preſent there are a few ſcattered

ſcattered ſettlements on each ſide of it, from its mouth as far as the iron works, which are about nine miles diſtant from Trois Rivieres; beyond that the country is but little known except to Indians.

Trois Rivieres contains about two hundred and fifty or three hundred houſes, and ranks as the third town, in point of ſize, in the provinces. It is one of the oldeſt ſettlements in the country, and its founder, it is ſaid, calculated upon its becoming in a ſhort time a city of great extent. It has hitherto, however, increaſed but very ſlowly in ſize, and there is no reaſon to imagine that it will increaſe more rapidly in future, at leaſt until the country bordering upon the St. Maurice becomes ſettled, a period that may be very diſtant. The bank of iron ore in the neighbourhood, by the manufacture of which it was expected that the town would ſuddenly become opulent, is now nearly exhauſted; nor do we find that this bank has ever furniſhed more ore than was ſufficient to keep one ſmall forge and one ſmall foundry employed at intervals. The fur trade alſo, from which ſo much benefit was expected, is now almoſt wholly centered at Quebec and Montreal; it is merely the ſmall quantity of furs brought down the St. Maurice, and ſome of the northern rivers that fall into the St. Lawrence, nearer to the town

of

of Trois Rivieres than to Quebec or Montreal, that is ſhipped there. Theſe furs are laden on board the Montreal ſhips, which ſtop oppoſite to the town as they go down the river.

The country in the vicinity of Trois Rivieres has been repreſented by ſome French travellers as wonderfully fertile, and as one of the moſt agreeable parts of Canada; but it is totally the reverſe. It is a level barren tract, and ſo ſandy, that in walking along many of the ſtreets of the town, and the roads in the neighbourhood, you ſink into the ſand at every ſtep above the ankles. The ſand is of a whitiſh colour, and very looſe. The air alſo ſwarms with muſquitoes, a certain proof of the low damp ſituation of the place. In none of the other inhabited parts of Canada, except in the neighbourhood of Lake St. Charles, were we ever annoyed with theſe troubleſome inſects. In Quebec, indeed, and Montreal, they are ſcarcely ever ſeen.

The ſtreets in Trois Rivieres are narrow, and the houſes in general ſmall and indifferent; many of them are built of wood. There are two churches in the town, the one an Engliſh epiſcopalian, the other a large Roman catholic pariſh church, formerly ſerved by the Recollets, or Franciſcan friars, but the order is now extinct in Trois Rivieres. The old monaſtery of the order, a large ſtone building, at

at preſent lies quite deſerted; and many of the houſes in the neighbourhood being alſo uninhabited, that part of the town wherein it is ſituated has a very dull gloomy aſpect. The college or monaſtery of the Jeſuits, alſo a large old building of ſtone in the ſame neighbourhood, has been converted into a gaol.

The only religious order at preſent exiſting in the town is that of St. Urſule, the ſiſterhood of which is as numerous as the convent will well permit. It was founded by M. de St. Vallier, biſhop of Quebec, in the year 1677. It is a ſpacious building, ſituated near that formerly belonging to the Recollets; and annexed to it, under the ſame roof, there is an hoſpital attended by the nuns. We were introduced to the chaplain of the order, a poor French emigrant curé, an intereſting and apparently a moſt amiable man, and under his guidance we received permiſſion to viſit the convent.

The firſt part we entered was the chapel, the doors of which open to the ſtreet under a porch. It is very lofty, but the area of it is ſmall. The altar, which is grand, and richly ornamented, ſtands nearly oppoſite to the entrance, and on each ſide of it is a lattice, the one communicating with an apartment allotted for ſick nuns, the other with the cœur of the chapel. On ringing a ſmall bell, a curtain

curtain at the inſide of this laſt lattice was withdrawn, and an apartment diſcovered, ſomewhat larger than the chapel, ſurrounded with pews, and furniſhed with an altar, at the foot of which ſat two of the ſiſterhood, with books in their hands, at their meditations. The fair Urſuline, who came to the lattice, ſeemed to be one of thoſe unfortunate females that had at laſt begun to feel all the horrors of confinement, and to lament the raſhneſs of that vow which had ſecluded her for ever from the world, and from the participation of thoſe innocent pleaſures, which, for the beſt and wiſeſt of purpoſes, the beneficent Ruler of the univerſe meant that his creatures ſhould enjoy. As ſhe withdrew the curtain, ſhe caſt a momentary glance through the grating, that imparted more than could be expreſſed by the moſt eloquent words; then retiring in ſilence, ſeated herſelf on a bench in a diſtant part of the cœur. The melancholy and ſorrow pourtrayed in the features of her lovely countenance intereſted the heart in her behalf, and it was impoſſible to behold her without partaking of that dejection which hung over her ſoul, and without deprecating at the ſame time the cruelty of the cuſtom which allows, and the miſtaken zeal of a religion that encourages, an artleſs and inexperienced young creature to renounce a world, of

which

which ſhe was deſtined, perhaps, to be a happy and uſeful member, for an unprofitable life of ſolitude, and unremitted penance for ſins never committed!

The hoſpital, which lies contiguous to the chapel, conſiſts of two large apartments, wherein are about twelve or fourteen beds. The apartments are airy, and the beds neat and well appointed. Each bed is dedicated to a particular ſaint, and over the foot of it is an invocation to the tutelary ſaint, in large characters, as, "St. Jaques priez pour moi." "St. Jean priez pour moi," &c. The patients are attended by a certain number of the ſiſterhood appointed for that purpoſe. An old prieſt, who appeared to be near his death, was the only perſon in the hoſpital when we paſſed through it; he was ſeated in an eaſy chair by the bed-ſide, and ſurrounded by a number of the ſiſters, who paid him the moſt aſſiduous attention.

The dreſs of the Urſulines conſiſts of a black ſtuff gown; a handkerchief of white linen tied by a running ſtring cloſe round the throat, and hanging down over the breaſt and ſhoulders, being rounded at the corners; a head-piece of white linen, which covers half the forehead, the temples, and ears, and is faſtened to the handkerchief; a black gauze veil, which conceals half the face only when down,

down, and flows loosely over the shoulders; and a large plain silver cross suspended from the breast. The dress is very unbecoming, the hair being totally concealed, and the shape of the face completely disguised by the close white head-piece.

From the hospital we were conducted through a long passage to an agreeable light parlour, the windows of which opened into the gardens of the convent. This was the apartment of the "Superieure," who soon made her appearance, accompanied by a number of the lay sisters. The conversation of the old lady and her protegées was lively and agreeable; a thousand questions were asked us respecting the former part of our tour, and our future destination; and they seemed by no means displeased at having a few strangers of a different sex from their own within the walls of the convent. Many apologies were made, because they could not take us through the "interieure," as there was an ordinance against admitting any visiters into it without leave from the bishop; they regretted exceedingly that we had not obtained this leave before we left Quebec. After some time was spent in conversation, a great variety of fancy works, the fabrication of the sisterhood, was brought down for our inspection, some of which it is always expected that strangers will

will purchaſe, for the order is but poor. We ſelected a few of the articles which appeared moſt curious, and having received them packed up in the neateſt manner in little boxes kept for the purpoſe, and promiſed to preſerve them in memory of the fair Urſulines, that handed them to us, we bade adieu to the ſuperieure, and returned to our lodgings.

It is for their very curious bark work that the ſiſters of this convent are particularly diſtinguiſhed. The bark of the birch tree is what they uſe, and with it they make pocket-books, work-baſkets, dreſſing-boxes, &c. &c. which they embroider with elk hair died of the moſt brilliant colours. They alſo make models of the Indian canoes, and various war-like implements uſed by the Indians.

Nearly all the birch bark canoes in uſe on the St. Lawrence and Utawa Rivers, and on the nearer lakes, are manufactured at Three Rivers, and in the neighbourhood, by Indians. The birch tree is found in great plenty near the town; but it is from the more northern part of the country, where the tree attains a very large ſize, that the principal part of the bark is procured that canoes are made with. The bark reſembles in ſome degree that of the cork tree, but it is of a cloſer grain, and alſo much more pliable, for it admits of being rolled up the ſame as a piece of cloth. The

Indians of this part of the country always carry large rolls of it in their canoes when they go on a hunting party, for the purpoſe of making temporary huts. The bark is ſpread on ſmall poles over their heads, and faſtened with ſtrips of elm bark, which is remarkably tough, to ſtakes, ſo as to form walls on the ſides.

The canoes are made with birch bark, as follows: The ribs, conſiſting of thick tough rods, are firſt bound together; then the birch bark is ſowed on in as large pieces as poſſible, and a thick coat of pitch is laid over the ſeams between the different pieces. To prevent the bark being injured by the cargo, and to make the canoe ſtronger, its inſide is lined with two layers of thin pieces of pine, laid in a contrary direction to each other. A canoe made in this manner is ſo light that two men could eaſily carry one on their ſhoulders capable of containing ſix people.

The birch canoes made at Three Rivers are put together with the utmoſt neatneſs, and on the water they appear very beautiful. They are made from a ſize ſufficient to hold one man only, to a ſize large enough for upwards of twenty. It is wonderful to ſee with what velocity a few ſkilful men with paddles can take one of theſe canoes of a ſize ſuitable to their number. In a few minutes they would leave the beſt moulded keel boat, conducted

by a ſimilar number of men with oars, far behind. None but experienced perſons ought ever to attempt to navigate birch canoes, for they are ſo light that they are apt to be overſet by the leaſt improper movement of the perſons in them.

The day after that on which we quitted Trois Rivieres, we reached Montreal once more. The villages between the two places are very numerous, and the face of the country around them is pleaſing, ſo that the eye of the traveller is conſtantly entertained as he paſſes on; but there is nothing in this part of the country particularly deſerving of mention.

LETTER XXIX.

The Party make the uſual Preparations for aſcending the St. Lawrence.—Buffalo Skins.—How uſed by Travellers.—Difficulty of proceeding to Lake Ontario otherwiſe than by Water.—Rapids above Montreal.—Village of La Chine.—King's Stores there.—Indian Village on the oppoſite ſide of the River.—Similitude between French Canadians and Indians in Perſon and Diſpoſition of Mind.—Owing to this the Power of the French over the In-

dians.—Summary View of the Indians in Lower Canada.—The Party embark in a Bateau at La Chine.—Mode of conducting Bateaux againſt a ſtrong Current.—Great Exertion requiſite—Canadians addicted to ſmoking.—How they meaſure Diſtances.—Deſcription of Lake St. Louis.—Clouds of Inſects over Reed Banks.—Party encamps on l'Iſle Perot.—Paſſage of Rapids called Les Caſcades—Their tremendous Appearance.—Deſcription of the Village of the Hill of Cedars.—Rapids du Coteau du Lac—Wonderful Rapidity of the Current.—Party encamps.—Lake St. Francis.—Point au Baudet.—L'Iſle aux Raiſins.—Iſlands in the River ſtill the Property of the Indians.—Not determined yet whether in the Britiſh Territory or that of the States.—Party encamps.—Storm.—Unpleaſant Situation of the Party.—Relieved.—Continue the Voyage.—Account of more Rapids.—Canals and Locks at different Places on the River St. Lawrence.—Immenſe Flights of Pigeons.—Emigration of Squirrels and Bears.—Oſwegatchee River and Fort la Galette deſcribed.—Advantageous Poſition of the latter.—Current above this gentle.—Bateaux ſail on all Night.—Songs of the Canadians.—Good Ear for Muſic.—Lake of a Thouſand Iſles.—Arrival at Kingston on Lake Ontario.—Obſervations on the Navigation of the

the St. Lawrence.—The St. Lawrence compared with the Miſſiſſipi.—A View of the different Rivers which open a Water Communication between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic.—Great Superiority of the St. Lawrence over all the reſt.—Of the Lake Trade.

Kingſton, September.

ON arriving at Montreal, our firſt concern was to provide a large travelling tent, and ſome camp equipage, buffalo ſkins *, a ſtore of dried proviſions, kegs of brandy and wine, &c. &c. and, in ſhort, to make every uſual and neceſſary preparation for proceeding up the River St. Lawrence. A few days afterwards, we took our paſſage for Kingſton, on board a bateau, which, together with twelve others, the commiſſary was ſending thither for the purpoſe of bringing down to Quebec the can-

* In the weſtern parts of Lower Canada, and throughout Upper Canada, where it is cuſtomary for travellers to carry their own bedding with them, theſe ſkins are very generally made uſe of for the purpoſe of ſleeping upon. For upwards of two months we ſcarcely ever had any other bed than one of the ſkins ſpread on the floor and a blanket to each perſon. The ſkins are dreſſed by the Indians with the hair on, and they are rendered by a certain proceſs as pliable as cloth. When the buffalo is killed in the beginning of the winter, at which time he is fenced againſt the cold, the hair reſembles very much that of a black bear; it is then long, ſtraight, and of a blackiſh colour; but when the animal is killed in the ſummer, the hair is ſhort and curly, and of a light brown colour, owing to its being ſcorched by the rays of the ſun.

non and ordnance ſtores that had been taken from the different military poſts on the lakes, preparatory to their being delivered up to the United States.

On the north-weſt ſide of the St. Lawrence, except for about fifty miles or thereabouts, are roads, and alſo ſcattered ſettlements, at no great diſtance from each other, the whole way between Montreal and Kingſton, which is ſituated at the eaſtern extremity of Lake Ontario; but no one ever thinks of going thither by land, on account of the numberleſs inconveniencies ſuch a journey would be attended with; indeed, the difficulty of getting horſes acroſs the many deep and rapid rivers falling into the St. Lawrence, would in itſelf be ſufficient to deter travellers from proceeding by land to Kingſton, ſuppoſing even that there were none other to encounter. A water conveyance is by far the moſt eligible, and except only between Quebec and Montreal, it is the conveyance univerſally made uſe of in every part of the country, that is, when people wiſh merely to follow the courſe of the rivers, in the neighbourhood of which alone there are any ſettlements.

The rapids in the St. Lawrence are ſo very ſtrong juſt above Montreal, that the bateaux are never laden at the town, but ſuffered to proceed empty as far as the village of La Chine,

Chine, which ſtands on the iſland of Montreal, about nine miles higher up. The goods are ſent, from Montreal, thither in carts.

La Chine is built on a fine gravelly beach, at the head of a little bay at the lower end of Lake St. Louis, which is a broad part of the river St. Lawrence. A ſmart current ſets down the lake, and owing to it there is generally a conſiderable curl on the ſurface of the water, even cloſe to the ſhore, which, with the appearance of the boats and canoes upon it in motion, gives the place a very lively air. The ſituation of the village is indeed extremely agreeable, and from ſome of the houſes there are moſt charming views of the lake, and of the country at the oppoſite ſide of it. There are very extenſive ſtorehouſes belonging to the King, and alſo to the merchants of Montreal. In the former the preſents for the Indians are depoſited as ſoon as they arrive from England; and prior to their being ſent up the country they are inſpected by the commanding officer of the garriſon of Montreal and a committee of merchants, who are bound to make a faithful report to government, whether the preſents are agreeable to the contract, and as good as could be obtained for the price that is paid for them.

In ſight of La Chine, on the oppoſite ſide of the St. Lawrence, ſtands the village of the

Cachenonaga Indians, whom I have already had occaſion to mention. The village contains about fifty log houſes and a Roman catholic church, built in the Canadian ſtyle, and ornamented within with pictures, lamps, &c. in ſuch a manner as to attract the eye as forcibly as poſſible. The outward ſhew, and numerous ceremonies of the Roman catholic religion, are particularly ſuited to the capacities of the Indians, and as but very little reſtraint is impoſed upon them by the miſſionaries, more of them become converts to that religion than to any other. The worſhip of the Holy Virgin meets in a very peculiar manner with the approbation of the ſquaws, and they ſing her praiſes with the moſt profound devotion.

In this and all the other Indian villages ſituated in the improved parts of Lower Canada, a great mixture of the blood of whites with that of the aborigines is obſervable in the perſons of the inhabitants; there are alſo conſiderable numbers of the French Canadians living in theſe villages, who have married Indian wives, and have been adopted into the different nations with whom they reſide. Many of the French Canadians bear ſuch a cloſe reſemblance to the Indians, owing to their dark complexions, black eyes, and long black hair, that when attired in the ſame habits it is only a perſon intimately acquainted with the features

of

of the Indians that could diſtinguiſh the one race of men from the other. The diſpoſitions of the two people alſo accord together in a very ſtriking manner; both are averſe to a ſettled life, and to regular habits of induſtry; both are fond of roving about, and procuring ſuſtenance by hunting rather than by cultivating the earth; nature ſeems to have implanted in their hearts a reciprocal affection for each other; they aſſociate together, and live on the moſt amicable terms; and to this one circumſtance more than to any other cauſe is to be attributed that wonderful aſcendancy which the French were ever known to have over the Indians, whilſt they had poſſeſſion of Canada. It is very remarkable indeed, that in the upper country, notwithſtanding that preſents to ſuch a very large amount are diſtributed amongſt the Indians through the hands of the Engliſh inhabitants, and that their natural rights are as much reſpected by them as they poſſibly can be, yet an Indian, even at this day, will always go to the houſe of a poor French farmer in preference to that of an Engliſhman.

The numbers of the Cachenonaga nation, in the village near La Chine, are eſtimated at one hundred and fifty perſons. The other Indian villages, in the civilized parts of Lower Canada, are, one of the Canaſadogas, ſituated near the mouth of the Utawas River; one of the

Little

Little Algonquins, near Trois Rivieres; one of the Aberachies, near Trois Rivieres, at the oppoſite ſide of the river; and one of the Hurons, near Quebec; but none of theſe villages are as large as that of the Cachenonagas. The numbers of the Indians in the lower province have diminiſhed very faſt of late years, as they have done in every other part of the continent, where thoſe of the white inhabitants have increaſed; in the whole lower province, at preſent, it is thought that there are not more than twelve hundred of them. Many of theſe Indians are continually loitering about the large towns, in expectation of getting ſpirits or bread, which they are extremely fond of, from the inhabitants. No leſs than two hundred, that had come a great diſtance in canoes, from the lower parts of the river St. Lawrence, were encamped on Point Levi when we viſited Quebec. Theſe Indians, ſqualid and filthy in the extreme, and going about the ſtreets every day in large parties, begging, preſented a moſt melancholy picture of human nature; and indeed, if a traveller never ſaw any of the North American Indians, but the moſt decent of thoſe who are in the habit of frequenting the large towns of Lower Canada, he would not be led to entertain an opinion greatly in their favour. The farther you aſcend up the country, and conſequently the nearer you ſee the Indians

Indians to what they were in their original ſtate, before their manners were corrupted by intercourſe with the whites, the more do you find in their character and conduct deſerving of admiration.

It was on the 28th day of Auguſt that we reached La Chine; the next day the "brigade," as it was called, of bateaux was ready, and in the afternoon we ſet out on our voyage. Three men are found ſufficient to conduct an empty bateau of about two tons burthen up the St. Lawrence, but if the bateau be laden more are generally allowed. They aſcend the ſtream by means of poles, oars, and ſails. Where the current is very ſtrong, they make uſe of the former, keeping as cloſe as poſſible to the ſhore, in order to avoid the current, and to have the advantage of ſhallow water to pole in. The men ſet their poles altogether at the ſame moment, and all work at the ſame ſide of the bateau; the ſteerſman, however, ſhifts his pole occaſionally from ſide to ſide, in order to keep the veſſel in an even direction. The poles commonly uſed are about eight feet in length, extremely light, and headed with iron. On coming to a deep bay or inlet, the men abandon the poles, take to their oars, and ſtrike if poſſible directly acroſs the mouth of the bay; but in many places the current proves ſo ſtrong that it is abſolutely impoſſible to ſtem it by means

means of oars, and they are obliged to pole entirely round the bays. Whenever the wind is favourable they ſet their ſail; but it is only at the upper end of the river, beyond the rapids, or on the lakes or broad parts of it, where the current is not ſwift, that the ſail by itſelf is ſufficient to impel them forward.

The exertion it requires to counteract the force of the ſtream by means of poles and oars is ſo great, that the men are obliged to ſtop very frequently to take breath. The places at which they ſtop are regularly aſcertained; ſome of them, where the current is very rapid, are not more than half a mile diſtant one from the other; others one or two, but none of them more than four miles apart. Each of theſe places the boatmen, who are almoſt all French Canadians, denominate "une pipe," becauſe they are allowed to ſtop at it and fill their pipes. A French Canadian is ſcarcely ever without a pipe in his mouth, whether working at the oar or plough; whether on foot, or on horſeback; indeed, ſo much addicted are the people to ſmoking, that by the burning of the tobacco in their pipes they commonly aſcertain the diſtance from one place to another. Such a place, they ſay, is three pipes off, that is, it is ſo far off that you may ſmoke three pipes full of tobacco whilſt you go thither. A pipe, in the moſt general acceptation

ceptation of the word, ſeemed to be about three quarters of an Engliſh mile.

Lake St. Louis, commencing, or rather terminating, at La Chine, for that village ſtands at the lower end of it, is about twelve miles in length and four in breadth. At its uppermoſt extremity it receives a large branch of the Utawas River, and alſo the ſouth-weſt branch of the River St. Lawrence, which by ſome geographers is called the River Cadaraqui, and by others the River Iroquois; but in the country, generally ſpeaking, the whole of that river, running from Lake Ontario to the Gulph of St. Lawrence, goes ſimply under the name of the St. Lawrence.

At the upper end of Lake St. Louis the water is very ſhallow, owing to the banks of mud and ſand waſhed up by the two rivers. Theſe very extenſive banks, are entirely covered with reeds, ſo that when a veſſel ſails over them ſhe appears at a little diſtance to be abſolutely ſailing over dry land. As we paſſed along this part of the lake we were enveloped with clouds of little inſects, different from any I ever ſaw before or afterwards in the country; but they are common, it is ſaid, on various parts of the River St. Lawrence. Their ſize was ſomewhat larger than that of the gnat; their colour a pure white; and ſo delicately were they formed, that by the ſlighteſt touch

touch they were deſtroyed and reduced to powder. They were particularly attracted by any white object, and having once alighted were not to be driven away but by force. The leaves of a book, which I happened to have in my hand, were in a few ſeconds ſo thickly covered by them that it was impoſſible to diſcern a ſingle letter, and no ſooner was one ſwarm of them bruſhed off than a freſh one immediately alighted. Theſe inſects have very broad wings in proportion to their ſize, and fly heavily, ſo that it is only when the air is remarkably calm that they can venture to make their appearance.

About ſunſet on this, the firſt evening of our voyage, we reached the iſland of Perot, ſituated at the mouth of the Utawas River. This iſland is about fourteen miles in circumference; its ſoil is fertile, and it is well cultivated. There are two conſiderable villages near its center, but towards Point St. Claire, at its lower extremity, the ſettlements are but very few. We landed at the point, and pitched our tent in a meadow which ſtood bordering upon the water. Here the bateaux were drawn up, and having been properly ſecured, the different crews, amounting in all to upwards of fifty men, divided themſelves into ſmall parties, and kindled fires along the ſhore, in order to cook their proviſions for the ſucceeding

ceeding day, and to keep themſelves warm during the night. Theſe men, who are engaged in conducting bateaux in Canada, are, as I have before obſerved, a very hardy race: when the weather is fair, they ſleep on the graſs at night, without any other covering than a ſhort blanket, ſcarcely reaching down to their knees; during wet weather a ſail or a blanket to the weather ſide, ſpread on poles ſtuck into the ground in an inclined direction, is all the ſhelter they deem neceſſary. On ſetting out each man is furniſhed with a certain allowance of ſalted pork, biſcuit, peaſe, and brandy; the peaſe and biſcuit they boil with ſome of the pork into porridge, and a large veſſel full of it, is generally kept at the head of the bateau, for the uſe of the crew when they ſtop in the courſe of the day. This porridge, or elſe cold fat ſalted pork, with cucumbers, conſtitutes the principal part of their food. The cucumber is a fruit that the lower claſſes of the French Canadians are extremely fond of; they uſe it however in a very indifferent ſtate, as they never pull it until it has attained a large ſize, and is become yellow and ſeedy. Cucumbers thus mellow, chopped into ſmall pieces without being peeled, and afterwards mixed with ſour cream, is one of their favourite diſhes.

At

At day break on the ſecond morning of our voyage, we quitted the iſland of Perot, and croſſed the Utawas River, in order to gain the mouth of the ſouth-weſt branch of the St. Lawrence. A tremendous ſcene is here preſented to the view; each river comes ruſhing down into the lake, over immenſe rocks, with an impetuoſity which, ſeemingly, nothing can reſiſt. The waves are as high as what are commonly met with in the Britiſh Channel during a ſmart breeze, and the breakers ſo numerous and dangerous, that one would imagine a bateau could not poſſibly live in the midſt of them; and indeed, unleſs it were navigated by men intimately acquainted with the place, and very expert at the ſame time, there would be evident danger of its being filled with water. Several times, as we paſſed through the breakers, the water daſhed over the ſides of our bateau. Tremendous and dangerous, however, as the rapids are at this ſpot, they are much leſs ſo than ſome of thoſe met with higher up the River St. Lawrence.

The water of the Utawas River is remarkably clear, and of a bright greeniſh colour; that of the St. Lawrence, on the contrary, is muddy, owing to its paſſing over deep beds of marl for ſome miles before it enters into Lake St. Louis. For a conſiderable way down the lake

lake the waters of the two rivers may be plainly diſtinguiſhed from each other.

The Rapids immediately at the mouth of the ſouth-weſt branch of the St. Lawrence are called "Les Caſcades," or, "Le Saut de "Trou." In laden bateaux it is no arduous taſk to ſhoot down them, but it is impoſſible to mount againſt the ſtream even in ſuch as are empty. In order to avoid the laborious taſk therefore of carrying them along the ſhore paſt the rapids, as uſed formerly to be done, a canal with a double lock has been made here at a great expence. This canal extends but a very little way, not more than fifty yards perhaps. Beyond this there is a ſucceſſion of other rapids, the firſt of which, called "Le Saut de Buiſſon' on account of the cloſeneſs of the woods along the ſhores on each ſide, is ſo ſtrong, that in order to paſs it, it is neceſſary to lighten the bateaux very conſiderably. If the cargoes are large, they are wholly taken out at once, and ſent forward in carts to the diſtance of a mile and a half, paſt all the rapids. The men are always obliged here to get out of the bateaux, and haul them along with ropes, it being wholly impracticable to counteract the force of the current by means of poles alone.

The paſſage of theſe rapids is ſo very tedious, that we here quitted the bateaux, took our

guns in hand, and proceeded on foot to "Le Coteau des Cedres," the Hill of Cedars, about nine miles higher up the river. In going thither you ſoon loſe ſight of the few ſtraggling houſes at the caſcades, and enter the receſſes of a remarkably thick wood, whoſe ſolemn gloom, together with the loud roaring of the waters at a diſtance, and the wild appearance of every object around you, inſpire the mind with a ſort of pleaſing horror. As you approach "Le Coteau des Cedres," the country aſſumes a ſofter aſpect; cultivated fields and neat cottages once more appear in view, and the river, inſtead of being agitated by tremendous rapids, is here ſeen gliding on with an even current between its lofty banks.

The village of the Hill of Cedars contains about thirty houſes, amongſt which we were agreeably ſurpriſed to find a remarkably neat and excellent tavern, kept by an Engliſh woman. We remained here until three in the afternoon, when we again ſet off on foot, partly for the pleaſure of beholding, from the top of the ſteep banks, the many noble and beautiful proſpects laid open before us, and partly for the pleaſure of ſtopping occaſionally to chat with the lively French girls, that, during this delicious ſeaſon of the year, ſat ſpinning in groups at the doors of the cottages. About five o'clock the bateaux overtook us;

but after proceeding in them for about two miles, we again landed to escape the tedious process of ascending fresh rapids. These are called the rapids "du Coteau du Lac St. François;" they are several miles in length, and though not the most dangerous, are yet the most tremendous to appearance of any in the whole river, the white breakers being distinctly visible at the distance of four miles; some travellers have gone so far as to represent them as even more terrible to the beholder than the falls of Niagara, but this is a very exaggerated account. Boats are here carried down with the stream at the rate of fourteen or fifteen miles an hour, according to the best information I could procure on the subject, though the Canadian boatmen and others declare that they are carried down at the rate of twenty miles in the hour. At some of the rapids, higher up the river, the current is considerably swifter than at this place.

In descending these rapids they pass through the breakers in the middle of the river, but in going up they keep close in to the shore, on the north-west side, and being here sheltered by a numerous cluster of islands, which break the force of the current, and having the benefit of a short canal and locks, they get past the rapids with less difficulty even than they pass the cascades. One of the islands here,

farther removed from the ſhore than the reſt, is called Priſoners Iſland, having been allotted for the reſidence of ſome of the American priſoners during the laſt war. There were ſome buildings on the iſland at that time, but it has been quite deſerted ſince, on account of the great difficulty of getting to it through the ſtrong rapids. During the war, an officer, who had compelled ſome of the Canadians, notwithſtanding their remonſtrances, to make an attempt to reach the iſland at an improper ſeaſon, periſhed, with a great number of men, in going thither. Of the whole party one alone eſcaped with his life. The St. Lawrence is here about two miles wide.

This evening, the ſecond of our voyage, the bateaux were drawn up for the night at the bottom of "Le Coteau du Lac," the Hill of the Lake, and we pitched our tent on the margin of a wood, at a little diſtance from the river. The next morning we proceeded again on foot for about two miles, when we came to a tavern, where we waited the arrival of the bateaux. The people of this houſe were Engliſh. From hence upwards there are but few French to be met with.

We were detained here nearly half the day in endeavouring to procure a freſh man, one of the conductor's crew having been ſeized with an intermittent fever. At laſt a man from

from a neighbouring ſettlement made his appearance, and we proceeded on our voyage. We now entered Lake St. François, which is about twenty-five miles in length, and five in breadth; but the wind being unfavourable, we were prevented from proceeding farther upon it than Point au Baudet, at which place the boundary line commences, that ſeparates the upper from the lower province. When the wind comes from the ſouth-weſt, the immenſe body of water in the lake is impelled directly towards this point, and a ſurge breaks in upon the beach, as tremendous as is ſeen on the ſea-ſhore. There was one ſolitary houſe here, which proved to be a tavern, and afforded us a well-dreſt ſupper of veniſon, and decent accommodation for the night.

The next day the wind was not more favourable; but as it was conſiderably abated, we were enabled to proſecute our voyage, coaſting along the ſhores of the lake. This was a moſt laborious and tedious buſineſs, on account of the numerous bays and inlets, which the wind was not ſufficiently abated to ſuffer us to croſs at their mouths: notwithſtanding all the difficulties, however, we had to contend with, we advanced nearly twenty-five miles in the courſe of the day.

At the head of Lake St. François, we landed on a ſmall iſland, called "Iſle aux Raiſins,"

on account of the number of wild vines growing upon it. The bateaux men gathered great quantities of the grapes, wherewith the trees were loaded, and alſo an abundance of plumbs, which they devoured with great avidity. Neither of the fruits, however, were very tempting to perſons whoſe palates had been accuſtomed to the taſte of garden fruits. The grapes were ſour, and not larger than peas; and as for the plumbs, though much larger in ſize, yet their taſte did not differ materially from that of ſloes.

Beyond L'Iſle aux Raiſins, in the narrow part of the river, there are ſeveral other iſlands, the largeſt of which called L'iſle St. Regis, is near ten miles in length. All theſe iſlands ſtill continue in the poſſeſſion of the Indians, and many of them, being ſituated as nearly as poſſible in the middle of the river, which here divides the Britiſh territory from that of the United States, it yet remains to be determined of what territory they form a part. It is ſincerely to be deſired that this matter may be adjuſted amicably in due time. A ſerious altercation has already taken place about an iſland ſimilarly ſituated in Detroit River, that will be more particularly mentioned hereafter. The Indians not only retain poſſeſſion of theſe different iſlands, but likewiſe of the whole of the ſouth-eaſt ſhore of the St. Lawrence,

Lawrence, ſituated within the bounds of the United States; they likewiſe have conſiderable ſtrips of land on the oppoſite ſhore, within the Britiſh dominions, bordering upon the river; theſe they have reſerved to themſelves for hunting. The Iroquois Indians have a village upon the Iſle of St. Regis, and another alſo upon the main land, on the ſouth-eaſt ſhore; as we paſſed it, ſeveral of the inhabitants put off in canoes, and exchanged unripe heads * of Indian corn with the men for bread; they alſo brought with them ſome very fine wild ducks and fiſh, which they diſpoſed of to us on very moderate terms.

On the fourth night of our voyage we encamped, as uſual, on the main land oppoſite the iſland of St. Regis; and the excellent viands we had procured from the Indians having been cooked, we ſet down to ſupper before a large fire, materials for which are never wanting in this woody country. The night was uncommonly ſerene, and we were induced to remain until a late hour in front of our tent, talking of the various occurrences in the courſe of the day; but we had ſcarcely retired to reſt, when the ſky became overcaſt,

* The heads of Indian corn, before they become hard, are eſteemed a great delicacy; the moſt approved method of dreſſing, is to parboil, and afterwards roaſt them.

a dreadful ſtorm aroſe, and by day-break the next morning we found ourſelves, and every thing belonging to us, drenched with rain. Our ſituation now was by no means agreeable; torrents ſtill came pouring down; neither our tent nor the woods afforded us any ſhelter, and the wind being very ſtrong, and as adverſe as it could blow, there was no proſpect of our being enabled ſpeedily to get into better quarters. In this ſtate we had remained for a conſiderable time, when one of the party, who had been rambling about in order to diſcover what ſort of a neighbourhood we were in, returned with the pleaſing intelligence that there was a houſe at no great diſtance, and that the owner had politely invited us to it. It was the houſe of an old provincial officer, who had received a grant of land in this part of the country for his paſt ſervices. We gladly proceeded to it, and met with a moſt cordial welcome from the captain and his fair daughters, who had provided a plenteous breakfaſt, and ſpared no pains to make their habitation, during our ſtay, as pleaſing to us as poſſible. We felt great ſatisfaction at the idea, that it would be in our power to ſpend the remainder of the day with theſe worthy and hoſpitable people; but alas, we had all formed an erroneous opinion of the weather; the wind ſuddenly veered about; the ſun broke through the thick clouds; the conductor

ductor gave the parting order; and in a few minutes we found ourſelves once more ſeated in our bateau.

From hence upwards, for the diſtance of forty miles, the current of the river is extremely ſtrong, and numberleſs rapids are to be encountered, which, though not ſo tremendous to appearance as thoſe at the Caſcades, and "Le "Coteau du Lac," are yet both more dangerous and more difficult to paſs. The great danger, however, conſiſts in going down them; it ariſes from the ſhallowneſs of the water and the great number of ſharp rocks, in the midſt of which the veſſels are hurried along with ſuch impetuoſity, that if they unfortunately get into a wrong channel, nothing can ſave them from being daſhed to pieces; but ſo intimately are the people uſually employed on this river acquainted with the different channels, that an accident of the ſort is ſcarcely ever heard of. "Le Long Saut," the Long Fall or Rapid, ſituated about thirty miles above Lake St. Francis, is the moſt dangerous of any one in the river, and ſo difficult a matter is it to paſs it, that it requires no leſs than ſix men on ſhore to haul a ſingle bateau againſt the current. There is a third canal with locks at this place, in order to avoid a point, which it would be wholly impracticable to weather in the ordinary way. Theſe different canals and locks have

have been made at the expence of government, and the profits arising from the tolls paid by every bateau that passes through them are placed in the public treasury. At these rapids, and at several of the others, there are very extensive flour and saw mills.

On the fifth night we arrived at a small farm house, at the top of the "Long Saut," wet from head to foot, in consequence of our having been obliged to walk past the rapids through woods and bushes still dripping after the heavy rain that had fallen in the morning. The woods in this neighbourhood are far more majestic than on any other part of the St. Lawrence; the pines in particular are uncommonly tall, and seem to wave their tops in the very clouds. In Canada, pines grow on the richest soils; but in the United States they grow mostly on poor ground: a tract of land covered solely with pines is there generally denominated "a pine barren," on account of its great poverty.

During a considerable part of the next day, we also proceeded on foot, in order to escape the tedious passage up the "Rapide Plat," and some of the other dangerous rapids in this part of the river. As we passed along, we had excellent diversion in shooting pigeons, several large flights of which we met with in the woods. The wild pigeons of Canada are not unlike

unlike the common Engliſh wood pigeons, except that they are of a much ſmaller ſize: their fleſh is very well flavoured. During particular years, theſe birds come down from the northern regions in flights that it is marvellous to tell of. A gentleman of the town of Niagara aſſured me, that once as he was embarking there on board ſhip for Toranto, a flight of them was obſerved coming from that quarter; that as he ſailed over Lake Ontario to Toronto, forty miles diſtant from Niagara, pigeons were ſeen flying over head the whole way in a contrary direction to that in which the ſhip proceeded; and that on arriving at the place of his deſtination, the birds were ſtill obſerved coming down from the north in as large bodies as had been noticed at any one time during the whole voyage; ſuppoſing, therefore, that the pigeons moved no faſter than the veſſel, the flight, according to this gentleman's account, muſt at leaſt have extended eighty miles. Many perſons may think this ſtory ſurpaſſing belief; for my own part, however, I do not heſitate to give credit to it, knowing, as I do, the reſpectability of the gentleman who related it, and the accuracy of his obſervation. When theſe birds appear in ſuch great numbers, they often light on the borders of rivers and lakes, and in the neighbourhood of farm houſes, at which time they

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are ſo unwary that a man with a ſhort ſtick might eaſily knock them down by hundreds. It is not oftener than once in ſeven or eight years, perhaps, that ſuch large flocks of theſe birds are ſeen in the country. The years in which they appear are denominated "pigeon "years."

There are alſo "bear years" and "ſquirrel "years." This was both a bear and a ſquirrel year. The former, like the pigeons, came down from the northern regions, and were moſt numerous in the neighbourhood of lakes Ontario and Erie, and along the upper parts of the River St. Lawrence. On arriving at the borders of theſe lakes, or of the river, if the oppoſite ſhore was in ſight, they generally took to the water, and endeavoured to reach it by ſwimming. Prodigious numbers of them were killed in croſſing the St. Lawrence by the Indians, who had hunting encampments, at ſhort diſtances from each other, the whole way along the banks of the river, from the iſland of St. Regis to Lake Ontario. One bear, of a very large ſize, boldly entered the river in the face of our bateaux, and was killed by ſome of our men whilſt ſwimming from the main land to one of the iſlands. In the woods it is very rare that bears will venture to attack a man; but ſeveral inſtances that had recently occurred were mentioned to us, where they had

had attacked a ſingle man in a canoe whilſt ſwimming, and ſo very ſtrong are they in the water, that the men thus ſet upon, being unarmed, eſcape narrowly with their lives.

The ſquirrels, this year, contrary to the bears, migrated from the ſouth, from the territory of the United States. Like the bears, they took to the water on arriving at it, but as if conſcious of their inability to croſs a very wide piece of water, they bent their courſe towards Niagara River, above the falls, and at its narroweſt and moſt tranquil part croſſed over into the Britiſh territory. It was calculated, that upwards of fifty thouſand of them croſſed the river in the courſe of two or three days, and ſuch great depredations did they commit on arriving at the ſettlements on the oppoſite ſide, that in one part of the country the farmers deemed themſelves very fortunate where they got in as much as one third of their crops of corn. Theſe ſquirrels were all of the black kind, ſaid to be peculiar to the continent of America; they are in ſhape ſimilar to the common grey ſquirrel, and weigh from about one to two pounds and a half each. Some writers have aſſerted, that theſe animals cannot ſwim, but that when they come to a river, in migrating, each one provides itſelf with a piece of wood or bark, upon which, when a favourable wind offers, they embark, ſpread their buſhy tails

tails to catch the wind, and are thus wafted over to the oppoſite ſide. Whether theſe animals do or do not croſs in this manner ſometimes, I cannot take upon me to ſay; but I can ſafely affirm, that they do not always croſs ſo, as I have frequently ſhot them in the water whilſt ſwimming: no animals ſwim better, and when purſued, I have ſeen them eagerly take to the water. Whilſt ſwimming, their tail is uſeful to them by way of rudder, and they uſe it with great dexterity; owing to its being ſo light and buſhy, the greater part of it floats upon the water, and thus helps to ſupport the animal. The migration of any of theſe animals in ſuch large numbers is ſaid to be an infallible ſign of a ſevere winter*.

On the ſixth evening of our voyage we ſtopped nearly oppoſite to Point aux Iroquois, ſo named from a French family having been cruelly maſſacred there by the Iroquois Indians in the early ages of the colony. The ground being ſtill extremely wet here, in conſequence of the heavy rain of the preceding day, we did not much reliſh the thoughts of paſſing the night in our tent; yet there ſeemed to be no alternative, as the only houſe in ſight was crowded with people, and not capable of afford-

* In the preſent inſtance it certainly was ſo, for the enſuing winter proved to be the ſevereſt that had been known in North America for ſeveral years.

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ing us any accommodations. Luckily, however, as we were ſearching about for the drieſt ſpot to pitch our tent upon, one of the party eſpied a barn at a little diſtance, belonging to the man of the adjoining houſe, of whom we procured the key; it was well ſtored with ſtraw, and having mounted to the top of the mow, we laid ourſelves down to reſt, and ſlept ſoundly there till awakened in the morning by the crowing of ſome cocks, that were perched on the beams above our head.

At an early hour we purſued our voyage, and before noon paſſed the laſt rapid, about three miles below the mouth of Oſwegatchee River, the moſt conſiderable of thoſe within the territory of the United States, which fall into the St. Lawrence. It conſiſts of three branches, that unite together about fifteen miles above its mouth, the moſt weſtern of which iſſues from a lake twenty miles in length and eight in breadth. Another of the branches iſſues from a ſmall lake or pond, only about four miles diſtant from the weſtern branch of Hudſon's River, that flows paſt New York. Both the Hudſon and Oſwegatchee are ſaid to be capable of being made navigable for light bateaux as far as this ſpot, where they approach within ſo ſhort a diſtance of each other, except only at a few places, ſo that the portages will be but very trifling. This however

ever is a mere conjecture, for Oſwegatchee River is but very imperfectly known, the country it paſſes through being quite uninhabited; but ſhould it be found, at a future period, that theſe rivers are indeed capable of being rendered navigable ſo far up the country, it will probably be through this channel that the chief part of the trade that there may happen to be between New York and the country bordering upon Lake Ontario will be carried on. It is at preſent carried on between that city and the lake by means of Hudſon River, as far as Albany, and from thence by means of the Mohawks River, Wood Creek, Lake Oneida, and Oſwego River, which falls into Lake Ontario. The harbour at the mouth of Oſwego River is very bad on account of the ſand banks; none but flat bottomed veſſels can approach with ſafety nearer to it than two miles; nor is there any good harbour on the ſouth ſide of Lake Ontario in the neighbourhood of any large rivers. Sharp built veſſels, however, of a conſiderable ſize, can approach with ſafety to the mouth of Oſwegatchee River. The Seneca, a Britiſh veſſel of war of twenty-ſix guns, uſed formerly to ply conſtantly between Fort de la Galette, ſituated at the mouth of that river, and the fort at Niagara; and the Britiſh fur ſhips on the lakes uſed alſo, at that time,

time, to discharge the cargoes there, brought down from the upper country. As therefore the harbour at the mouth of Oswegatchee is so much better than that at the mouth of Oswego River, and as they are nearly an equal distance from New York, there is reason to suppose, that if the river navigation should prove equally good, the trade between the lakes and New York will be for the most part, if not wholly, carried on by means of Oswegatchee rather than of Oswego River. With a fair wind, the passage from Oswegatchee River to Niagara is accomplished in two days; a voyage only one day longer than that from Oswego to Niagara with a fair wind.

Fort de la Galette was erected by the French, and though not built till long after Fort Cataraguis or Frontignac, now Kingston, yet they esteemed it by far the most important military post on the St. Lawrence, in the upper country, as it was impossible for any boat or vessel to pass up or down that river without being observed, whereas they might easily escape unseen behind the many islands opposite to Kingston. Since the close of the American war, Fort de la Galette has been dismantled, as it was within the territory of the United States: nor would any advantage have arisen from its retention; for it was never

of any importance to us but as a trading poſt, and as ſuch Kingſton, which is within our own territory, is far more eligibly ſituated in every point of view; it has a more ſafe and commodious harbour, and the fur ſhips coming down from Niagara, by ſtopping there, are ſaved a voyage of ſixty miles up and down the St. Lawrence, which was oftentimes found to be more tedious than the voyage from Niagara to Kingſton.

In the neighbourhood of La Galette, on the Oſwegatchee River, there is a village of the Oſwegatchee Indians, whoſe numbers are eſtimated at one hundred warriors.

The current of the St. Lawrence, from Oſwegatchee upwards, is much more gentle than in any other part between Montreal and Lake Ontario, except only where the river is conſiderably dilated, as at lakes St. Louis and St. François; however, notwithſtanding its being ſo gentle, we did not advance more than twenty-five miles in the courſe of the day, owing to the numerous ſtops that we made, more from motives of pleaſure than neceſſity. The evening was uncommonly fine, and towards ſun-ſet a briſk gale ſpringing up, the conductor judged it adviſable to take advantage of it, and to continue the voyage all night, in order to make up for the time we had loſt during the day. We accordingly proceeded,

but towards midnight the wind died away; this circumſtance, however, did not alter the determination of the conductor. The men were ordered to the oars, and notwithſtanding that they had laboured hard during the preceding day, and had had no reſt, yet they were kept cloſely at work until day-break, except for one hour, during which they were allowed to ſtop to cook their proviſions. Where there is a gentle current, as in this part of the river, the Canadians will work at the oar for many hours without intermiſſion; they ſeemed to think it no hardſhip to be kept employed in this inſtance the whole night; on the contrary, they plied as vigorouſly as if they had but juſt ſet out, ſinging merrily the whole time. The French Canadians have in general a good ear for muſic, and ſing duets with tolerable accuracy. They have one very favourite duet amongſt them, called the "rowing duet," which as they ſing they mark time to with each ſtroke of the oar; indeed, when rowing in ſmooth water, they mark the time of moſt of the airs they ſing in the ſame manner.

About eight o'clock the next, and eighth morning of our voyage, we entered the laſt lake before you come to that of Ontario, called the Lake of a Thouſand Iſlands, on account of the multiplicity of them which it contains.

Many of these islands are scarcely larger than a bateau, and none of them, except such as are situated at the upper and lower extremities of the lake, appeared to me to contain more than fifteen English acres each. They are all covered with wood, even to the very smallest. The trees on these last are stunted in their growth, but the larger islands produce as fine timber as is to be found on the main shores of the lake. Many of these islands are situated so closely together, that it would be easy to throw a pebble from one to the other, notwithstanding which circumstance, the passage between them is perfectly safe and commodious for bateaux, and between some of them that are even thus close to each other, is water sufficient for a frigate. The water is uncommonly clear, as it is in every part of the river, from Lake St. Francis upwards: between that lake and the Utawas River downwards it is discoloured, as I have before observed, by passing over beds of marl. The shores of all these islands under our notice are rocky; most of them rise very boldly, and some exhibit perpendicular masses of rock towards the water upwards of twenty feet high. The scenery presented to view in sailing between these islands is beautiful in the highest degree. Sometimes, after passing through a narrow strait, you find yourself in a bason, land locked

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on every ſide, that appears to have no communication with the lake, except by the paſſage through which you entered; you are looking about, perhaps, for an outlet to enable you to proceed, thinking at laſt to ſee ſome little channel which will juſt admit your bateau, when on a ſudden an expanded ſheet of water opens upon you, whoſe boundary is the horizon alone; again in a few minutes you find yourſelf land locked, and again a ſpacious paſſage as ſuddenly preſents itſelf; at other times, when in the middle of one of theſe baſons, between a cluſter of iſlands, a dozen different channels, like ſo many noble rivers, meet the eye, perhaps equally unexpectedly, and on each ſide the iſlands appear regularly retiring till they ſink from the ſight in the diſtance. Every minute, during the paſſage of this lake, the proſpect varies. The numerous Indian hunting encampments on the different iſlands, with the ſmoke of their fires riſing up between the trees, added conſiderably to the beauty of the ſcenery as we paſſed it. The Lake of a Thouſand Iſlands is twenty-five miles in length, and about ſix in breadth. From its upper end to Kingſton, at which place we arrived early in the evening, the diſtance is fifteen miles.

The length of time required to aſcend the River St. Lawrence, from Montreal to Kingſton,

ſton, is commonly found to be about ſeven days. If the wind ſhould be ſtrong and very favourable, the paſſage may be performed in a leſs time; but ſhould it, on the contrary, be adverſe, and blow very ſtrong, the paſſage will be protracted ſomewhat longer; an adverſe or favourable wind, however, ſeldom makes a difference of more than three days in the length of the paſſage upwards, as in each caſe it is neceſſary to work the bateaux along by means of poles for the greater part of the way. The paſſage downwards is performed in two or three days, according to the wind. The current is ſo ſtrong, that a contrary wind ſeldom lengthens the paſſage in that direction more than a day.

The Miſſiſſippi is the only river in North America, which, for grandeur and commodiouſneſs of navigation, comes in competition with the St. Lawrence, or with that river which runs from Lake Ontario to the ocean. If, however, we conſider that immenſe body of water that flows from Lake Winnipeg through the Lake of the Woods, Lake Superior, &c. down to the ſea, as one entire ſtream, and of courſe as a continuation of the St. Lawrence, it muſt be allowed to be a very ſuperior river to the Miſſiſſippi in every point of view; and we may certainly conſider it as one ſtream, with as much reaſon as we look upon

upon that as one river which flows from Lake Ontario to the ſea; for before it meets the ocean it paſſes through four large lakes, not indeed to be compared with thoſe of Erie or Superior, in ſize, but they are independent lakes notwithſtanding, as much as any of the others. The Miſſiſſippi is principally to be admired for the evenneſs of its current, and the prodigious length of way it is navigable, without any interruption, for bateaux of a very large burthen; but in many reſpects it is a very inferior river to the St. Lawrence, properly ſo called. The Miſſiſſippi at its mouth is not twenty miles broad, and the navigation is there ſo obſtructed by banks or bars, that a veſſel drawing more than twelve feet water cannot aſcend it without very imminent danger. Theſe bars at its mouth or mouths, for it is divided by ſeveral iſlands, are formed by large quantities of trees that come drifting down from the upper country, and when once ſtopped by any obſtacle, are quickly cemented together by the mud, depoſited between the branches by the waters of the river, which are uncommonly foul and muddy. Freſh bars are formed, or the old bars are enlarged every year, and it is ſaid, that unleſs ſome ſteps are taken to prevent the lodgments of the trees annually brought down at the time of the inundation, the navigation may in a few years be ſtill more ob-

ſtructed than it is at preſent. It is notorious, that ſince the river was firſt diſcovered, ſeveral iſlands and points have been formed near its mouth, and the different channels have undergone very material alterations for the worſe, as to their courſes and depths. The River St. Lawrence, however, on the contrary, is no leſs than ninety miles wide at its mouth, and it is navigable for ſhips of the line as far as Quebec, a diſtance of four hundred miles from the ſea. The channel alſo, inſtead of having been impaired by time, is found to be conſiderably better now than when the river was firſt diſcovered; and there is reaſon to imagine that it will improve ſtill more in proceſs of time, as the clear water that flows from Lake Ontario comes down with ſuch impetuoſity, during the floods in the ſpring of the year, as frequently to remove banks of gravel and looſe ſtones in the river, and thus to deepen its bed. The channel on the north ſide of the iſland of Orleans, immediately below Quebec, which, according to the account of Le P. de Charlevoix, was not ſufficiently deep in the year 1720 to admit a ſhallop of a ſmall ſize, except at the time of high tides, is at preſent found to be deep enough for the largeſt veſſels, and is the channel moſt generally uſed.

The

The following table ſhews for what veſſels the St. Lawrence is navigable in different places; and alſo points out the various breadths of the river from its mouth upwards:

Names of Places.	Diſtances in miles aſcending.	Breadth in miles.
At its mouth		90
At Cape Cat	140	30
At Saguenay River	120	18
At the lower extremity of the Iſle of Orleans	110	15*
At the baſon between the Iſle of Orleans and Quebec	30	5†
From Quebec to Lake St. Pierre	90	
Lake St. Pierre	30	14
To La Valterie	10	1
To Montreal	30	2 to 4‡

* This iſland is 25 miles in length and 6 in breadth, the river on each ſide is about 2 miles wide.

† Thus far, 400 miles from its mouth, it is navigable for ſhips of the line with ſafety.

‡ To this place, 560 miles, it is navigable with perfect ſafety for ſhips drawing 14 feet water. Veſſels of a much larger draught have proceeded many miles above Quebec, but the channel is very intricate and dangerous.

To

Names of Places.	Diſtances in miles aſcending.	Breadth in miles.
To Lake St. Louis - -	6 - -	—¾
Lake St. Louis - - -	12 - -	4
To Lake St. Francis - -	25 -	½ to 2
Lake St. Francis - - -	20 - -	5
To the Lake of a Thouſand Iſles - - - - - - -	90 -	¼ to 1
Lake of a Thouſand Iſles	25 - -	6
To Kingſton, on Lake Ontario - - - - -	15 -	2½ to 6
	743	

During the whole of its courſe the St. Lawrence is navigable for bateaux of two tons burthen, except merely at the rapids above Montreal, at the Fall of the Thicket, and at the Long Fall, where, as has been already pointed out, it is neceſſary to lighten the bateaux, if heavily laden. At each of theſe places, however, it is poſſible to conſtruct canals, ſo as to prevent the trouble of unlading any part of the cargoes of the bateaux, and at a future day, when the country becomes rich, ſuch canals no doubt will be made.

Although the lakes are not immediately connected with the Atlantic Ocean by any other river than the St. Lawrence, yet there are

are ſeveral ſtreams that fall into the Atlantic, ſo nearly connected with others flowing into the lakes, that by their means trade may be carried on between the ocean and the lakes. The principal channels for trade between the ocean and the lakes are four in number; the firſt, along the Miſſiſſippi and the Ohio, and thence up the Wabaſh, Miami, Muſhingun, or the Alleghany rivers, from the head of which there are portages of from one to eighteen miles to rivers that fall into Lake Erie; ſecondly, along the Patowmac River, which flows paſt Waſhington, and from thence along Cheat River, the Monongahela and Alleghany rivers and French Creek to Preſqu' Iſle on Lake Erie; thirdly, along Hudſon's River, which falls into the Atlantic at New York, and afterwards along the Mohawk River, Wood Creek, Lake Oneida, and Oſwego River, which laſt falls into Lake Ontario; fourthly, along the St. Lawrence.

The following is a ſtatement of the entire length of each of theſe channels or routes, and of the lengths of the portages in each, reckoning from the higheſt ſeaport on each river that will receive veſſels of a ſuitable ſize for croſſing the Atlantic to Lake Erie, which is the moſt central of the lakes to the four ports:

From

	Length of Way in Miles.	Length of the Portages.
From Montreal - - -	440	22
From Washington - -	450	80*
From New York - -	500	30
From New Orleans - -	1,800	1 to 18†

* When the navigation is opened, this will be reduced, it is said, to 50 miles.

† According to the route followed from the Ohio to the Lake.

From this statement it not only appears evident that the St. Lawrence opens a shorter passage to the lakes than any of the other rivers, but also that the portages are shorter than in any of the other routes; the portages are also fewer, and goods may be transported in the same boats the whole way from Montreal to the lakes; whereas in conveying goods thither either from Washington or New York, it is necessary to employ different boats and men on each different river, or else to transport the boats themselves on carriages over the portages from one river to another. It is always an object of importance to avoid a portage, as by every change in the mode of conveyance the expence of carriage is increased, and there is an additional risk of pillage from the goods passing through the hands of a greater number

number of people. Independent of theſe conſiderations, the St. Lawrence will, on another account, be found a more commodious channel than any other for the carrying on of trade between the ocean and the lakes. Conſtantly ſupplied from that immenſe reſervoir of water, Lake Ontario, it is never ſo low, even in the drieſt ſeaſon, as not to be ſufficiently deep to float laden bateaux. The ſmall ſtreams, on the contrary, which connect Hudſon's River, the Patowmac, and the Miſſiſſippi with the lakes, are frequently ſo dried up in ſummer time, that it is ſcarcely poſſible to paſs along them in canoes. For upwards of four months in the ſummer of 1796, the Mohawk River was ſo low, that it was totally impracticable to tranſport merchandize along it during the greater part of its courſe, and the traders in the back country, after waiting for a length of time for the goods they wanted, were under the neceſſity at laſt of having them forwarded by land carriage. The navigation of this river, it is ſaid, becomes worſe every year, and unleſs ſeveral long canals are cut, there will be an end to the water communication between New York and Lake Ontario by that route. The Alleghany River and French Creek, which connect the Patowmac with Lake Erie, are equally affected by droughts; indeed it is only during floods, occaſioned by the melting of the

ſnow,

ſnow, or by heavy falls of rain, that goods can be tranſported with eaſe either by the one route or the other.

By far the greater part of the trade to the lakes is at preſent centered at Montreal; for the Britiſh merchants not only can convey their goods from thence to the lakes for one third leſs than what it coſts to convey the ſame goods thither from New York, but they can likewiſe afford to ſell them, in the firſt inſtance, conſiderably cheaper than the merchants of the United States. The duties paid on the importation into Canada of refined ſugar, ſpirits, wine, and coffee, are conſiderably leſs than thoſe paid on the importation of the ſame commodities into the United States; and all Britiſh hardware, and dry goods in general, are admitted duty free into Canada, whereas, in the United States, they are chargeable, on importation from Europe, with a duty of fifteen per cent. on the value. To attempt to levy duties on foreign manufactures ſent into the ſtates from Canada would be an idle attempt, as from the great extent of their frontier, and its contiguity to Canada, it would at all times be an eaſy matter to ſend the goods clandeſtinely into them, in order to avoid the duties.

The trade carried on from Montreal to the lakes is at preſent very conſiderable, and increaſing every year. Already are there extenſive

ſive ſettlements on the Britiſh ſide of Lake Ontario, at Niagara, at Toronto, at the Bay of Canti, and at Kingſton, which contain nearly twenty thouſand inhabitants; and on the oppoſite ſhore, the people of the ſtates are puſhing forward their ſettlements with the utmoſt vigour. On Lake Erie, and along Detroit River alſo, the ſettlements are increaſing with aſtoniſhing rapidity, both on the Britiſh and on the oppoſite ſide.

The importance of the back country trade, and the trade to the lakes is in fact the back country trade, has already been demonſtrated; and it has been ſhewn, that every ſea-port town in the United States has increaſed in ſize in proportion to the quantum it enjoyed of this trade; and that thoſe towns moſt conveniently ſituated for carrying it on, were thoſe that had the greateſt ſhare of it; as, therefore, the ſhores of the lake increaſe in population, and of courſe as the demand for European manufactures increaſes amongſt the inhabitants, we may expect to ſee Montreal, which of all the ſea-ports in North America is the moſt conveniently ſituated for ſupplying them with ſuch manufactures, increaſe proportionably in ſize; and as the extent of back country it is connected with, by means of water, is as great, and alſo as fertile as that with which any of the large towns of the United

United States are connected, it is not improbable but that Montreal at a future day will rival in wealth and in size the greatest of the cities on the continent of North America.

LETTER XXX.

Description of the Town of Kingston.—Formerly called Fort Cadaraqua.— Extensive Trade carried on here.—Nature of it.—Inhabitants very hospitable.—Harbours on Lake Ontario.—Ships of War on that Lake.—Merchant Vessels.—Naval Officers.—Expence of building and keeping up Vessels very great.—Why.—No Iron Mines yet opened in the Country.—Copper may be more easily procured than Iron.—Found in great Quantities on the Borders of Lake Superior.—Embark in a Trading Vessel on Lake Ontario.—Description of that Lake.—A Septennial Change in the Height of the Waters said to be observable—also a Tide that ebbs and flows every Two Hours.—Observations on these Phenomena.—Voyage across the Lake similar to a Sea Voyage.—Come in Sight of Niagara Fort.—Land at Missisaguis Point.—Missisaguis Indians.—One of their Chiefs killed in an

an Affray.—How treated by the British Government.—Their revengeful Disposition.—Mississaguis good Hunters.—How they kill Salmon.—Variety of Fish in the Lakes and Rivers of Canada.—Sea Wolves.—Sea Cows.—Description of the Town of Niagara or Newark.—The present Seat of Government.—Scheme of removing it elsewhere.—Unhealthiness of the Town of Niagara and adjacent Country.—Navy Hats.—Fort of Niagara surrendered pursuant to Treaty.—Description of it.—Description of the other Forts surrendered to the People of the United States.—Shewn not to be so advantageous to them as was expected.—Superior Position of the new British Posts pointed out.

Niagara, September.

KINGSTON is situated at the mouth of a deep bay, at the north eastern extremity of Lake Ontario. It contains a fort and barracks, an English episcopalian church, and about one hundred houses, the most of which last were built, and are now inhabited by persons who emigrated from the United States at the close of the American war. Some few of the houses are built of stone and brick, but by far the greater part of them are of wood. The fort is of stone, and consists of a square with four bastions. It was erected by M.

le Comte de Frontinac, as early as the year 1672, and was for a time called after him; but inſenſibly it loſt his name, and received inſtead of it that of Cadaraqui, the name of a creek which falls into the bay. This name remained common to the fort and to the town until a few years ago, when it was changed to that of Kingſton. From ſixty to one hundred men are uſually quartered in the barracks.

Kingſton is a place of very conſiderable trade, and it is conſequently increaſing moſt rapidly in ſize. All the goods brought up the St. Lawrence for the ſupply of the upper country are here depoſited in ſtores, preparatory to their being ſhipped on board veſſels ſuitable to the navigation of the lake; and the furs from the various poſts on the nearer lakes are here likewiſe collected together, in order to be laden on board bateaux, and ſent down the St. Lawrence. Some furs are brought in immediately to the town by the Indians, who hunt in the neighbouring country, and along the upper parts of the St. Lawrence, but the quantity is not large. The principal merchants reſident at Kingſton are partners of old eſtabliſhed houſes at Montreal and Quebec. A ſtranger, eſpecially if a Britiſh ſubject, is ſure to meet with a moſt hoſpitable and friendly reception from them, as he paſſes through the place.

During

During the autumn the inhabitants of Kingſton ſuffer very much from intermittent fevers, owing to the town being ſituated on a low ſpot of ground, contiguous to an extenſive moraſs.

The bay adjoining to Kingſton affords good anchorage, and is the ſafeſt and moſt commodious harbour on all Lake Ontario. The bay of Great Sodus, on the ſouth ſide of the lake, and that of Toronto, ſituated on the north ſide of the lake, nearly in the ſame meridian with Niagara, are ſaid to be the next beſt to that of Kingſton; but the entrance into each of them is obſtructed by ſand banks, which in rough weather cannot be croſſed without imminent danger in veſſels drawing more than five or ſix feet water. On the borders of the bay at Kingſton there is a King's dock yard, and another which is private property. Moſt of the Britiſh veſſels of burthen on Lake Ontario have been built at theſe yards. Belonging to his Majeſty there were on Lake Ontario, when we croſſed it, three veſſels of about two hundred tons each, carrying from eight to twelve guns, beſides ſeveral gun boats; the laſt, however, were not in commiſſion, but laid up in Niagara River; and in conſequence of the ratification of the treaty of amity and commerce between the United States and his Britannic Majeſty, orders were

iſſued, ſhortly after we left Kingſton, for laying up the other veſſels of war, one alone excepted *. For one King's ſhip there would be ample employment on the lake, in conveying to the upper country the preſents for the Indians and the ſtores for the troops, and in tranſporting the troops acroſs the lake when they changed quarters. Every military officer at the outpoſts enjoys the privilege of having a certain bulk, according to his rank, carried for him in the King's veſſels, free of all charges. The naval officers, if their veſſels be not otherwiſe engaged, are allowed to carry a cargo of merchandize when they ſail from one port to another, the freight of which is their perquiſite; they likewiſe have the liberty, and are conſtantly in the practice, of carrying paſſengers acroſs the lake at an eſtabliſhed price. The commodore of the King's veſſels on Lake Ontario is a French Canadian, and ſo likewiſe are moſt of the officers under him. Their uniform is blue and white, with large yellow buttons, ſtamped with the figure of a beaver, over which is inſcribed the word, "Canada." The naval officers are under the controul of the military officer commandant, at every poſt where

* Subſequent orders, it was ſaid, were iſſued, during the ſummer of 1797, to have one or more of theſe veſſels put again in commiſſion.

their

their veſſels happen to touch; and they cannot leave their veſſels to go up into the country at any time without his permiſſion.

Several decked merchant veſſels, ſchooners, and ſloops, of from fifty to two hundred tons each, and alſo numberleſs large ſailing bateaux, are kept employed on Lake Ontario. No veſſels are deemed proper for the navigation of theſe lakes but complete ſea boats, or elſe flat bottomed veſſels, ſuch as canoes and bateaux, that can ſafely run aſhore on an emergency At preſent the people of the United States have no other veſſels than bateaux on the lake, and whether they will deem it proper to have larger veſſels, as their harbours are all ſo indifferent, remains yet to be determined. The large Britiſh veſſels ply moſtly between Kingſton and Niagara, and but very rarely touch at any other place.

The expence of building, and equipping veſſels on Lake Ontario, is very conſiderable; and it is ſtill greater on the more diſtant lakes, as the larger part of the iron implements, and all the cordage wanted for that purpoſe, are imported from Great Britain, through the medium of the lower province. There can be no doubt, however, but that when the country is become more populous, an ample ſupply of theſe neceſſary articles will be readily procured on the ſpot; for the ſoil of the upper province

is well adapted to the growth of hemp, and iron ore has been discovered in many parts of the country. Hemp already begins to be cultivated in small quantities; but it has hitherto been the policy of government to direct the attention of the people to agriculture, rather than to any other pursuit, so that none of the iron mines, which, together with all other mines that are, or that may hereafter be discovered, are the exclusive property of the crown, have yet been opened. The people of the United States, however, alive to every prospect of gain, have already sent persons to look for iron ore in that part of their territory situated conveniently to the lakes. These persons have been very successful in their searches; and as works will undoubtedly be established speedily by them in this quarter for the manufacture of iron, and as they will be able to afford it on much better terms than that which is brought all the way from Lower Canada, it is probable that government will encourage the opening of mines in our own dominions, rather than suffer the people of the States to enjoy such a very lucrative branch of trade as they must necessarily have, if the same policy is persisted in which has hitherto been pursued.

Copper, in the more remote parts of Upper Canada, is found in much greater abundance than

than iron, and as it may be extracted from the earth with conſiderably leſs trouble than any of the iron ore that has yet been diſcovered, there is reaſon to imagine, that at a future day it will be much more uſed than iron for every purpoſe to which it can be applied. On the borders of a river, which falls into the ſouth-weſt ſide of Lake Superior, virgin copper is found in the greateſt abundance; and on moſt of the iſlands on the eaſtern ſide it is alſo found. In the poſſeſſion of a gentleman at Niagara I ſaw a lump of virgin copper of ſeveral ounces weight, apparently as pure as if it had paſſed through fire, which I was informed had been ſtruck off with a chiſel from a piece equally pure, growing on one of theſe iſlands, which muſt at leaſt have weighed forty pounds. Rich veins of copper are viſible in almoſt all the rocks on theſe iſlands towards the ſhore; and copper ore, reſembling copperas, is likewiſe found in deep beds near the water: in a few hours bateaux might here be filled with ore, and in leſs than three days conveyed to the Straits of St. Mary, after paſſing which the ore might be laden on board large veſſels, and conveyed by water without any further interruption as far as Niagara River. The portage at the Straits of St. Mary may be paſſed in a few hours, and with a fair wind large veſſels, proper for traverſing

Lakes Huron and Erie, may come down to the eaſtern extremity of the latter lake in ſix days.

Not only the building and fitting out of veſſels on the lakes is attended with conſiderable expence, but the coſt of keeping them up is likewiſe found to be very great, for they wear out much ſooner than veſſels employed commonly on the ocean; which circumſtance, according to the opinion of the naval gentlemen on the lakes, is owing to the freſhneſs of the water; added to this, no ſailors are to be hired but at very high wages, and it is found neceſſary to retain them at full pay during the five months of the year that the veſſels are laid up on account of the ice, as men cannot be procured at a moment's notice. The ſailors, with a few exceptions only, are procured from ſea ports, as it is abſolutely neceſſary on theſe lakes, the navigation of which is more dangerous than that of the ocean, to have able and experienced ſeamen. Lake Ontario itſelf is never frozen out of ſight of land, but its rivers and harbours are regularly blocked up by the ice.

The day after that on which we reached Kingſton, we took our paſſage for Niagara on board a ſchooner of one hundred and eighty tons burthen, which was waiting at the merchant's wharf for a fair wind. The eſtabliſhed

bliſhed price of the paſſage acroſs the lake in the cabin is two guineas, and in the ſteerage one guinea, for each perſon: this is by no means dear, conſidering that the captain, for the money, keeps a table for each reſpective ſet of paſſengers. The cabin table on board this veſſel was really well ſerved, and there was abundance of port and ſherry wine, and of every ſort of ſpirits, for the uſe of the cabin paſſengers. The freight of goods acroſs the lake is dearer in proportion, being thirty-ſix ſhillings Britiſh per ton, which is nearly as much as was paid for the tranſportation of a ton of goods acroſs the Atlantic previous to the preſent war; it cannot, however, be deemed exorbitant, when the expence of building and keeping the veſſels in repair, and the high wages of the ſailors, &c. are taken into conſideration.

On the 7th of September, in the afternoon, the wind became favourable for croſſing the lake; notice was in conſequence immediately ſent round to the paſſengers, who were diſperſed in different parts of the town, to get ready; all of them hurried on board; the veſſel was unmoored, and in a few minutes ſhe was wafted out into the lake by a light breeze. For the firſt mile and a half, in going from Kingſton, the proſpect is much confined, on account of the many large iſlands

on

on the left hand ſide; but on weathering a point on one of the iſlands, at the end of that diſtance, an extenſive view of the lake ſuddenly opens, which on a ſtill clear evening, when the ſun is ſinking behind the lofty woods that adorn the ſhores, is extremely grand and beautiful.

Lake Ontario is the moſt eaſterly of the four large lakes through which the boundary line paſſes, that ſeparates the United States from the province of Upper Canada. It is two hundred and twenty miles in length, from eaſt to weſt, and ſeventy miles wide in the broadeſt part, and, according to calculation, contains about 2,390,000 acres. This lake is leſs ſubject to ſtorms than any of the others, and its waters in general, conſidering their great expanſe, are wonderfully tranquil. During the firſt evening of our voyage there was not the leaſt curl even on their ſurface, they were merely agitated by a gentle ſwell; and during the ſubſequent part of the voyage, the waves were at no time ſo high as to occaſion the ſlighteſt ſickneſs amongſt any of the paſſengers. The depth of the water in the lake is very great; in ſome parts it is unfathomable. On looking over the ſide of a veſſel, the water, owing to its great depth, appears to be of a blackiſh colour, but it is nevertheleſs very clear, and any white ſubſtance thrown overboard

board may be diſcerned at the depth of ſeveral fathoms from the ſurface; it is, however, by no means ſo clear and tranſparent as the water of ſome of the other lakes. Mr. Carver, ſpeaking of Lake Superior, ſays, "When it was "calm, and the ſun ſhone bright, I could ſit "in my canoe, where the depth was upwards "of ſix fathoms, and plainly ſee huge piles "of ſtone at the bottom, of different ſhapes, "ſome of which appeared as if they had been "hewn; the water was at this time as pure "and tranſparent as air, and my canoe ſeemed "as if it hung ſuſpended in that element. It "was impoſſible to look attentively through "this limpid medium, at the rocks below, "without finding, before many minutes were "elapſed, your head ſwim, and your eyes no "longer able to behold the dazzling ſcene."

The water of Lake Ontario is very well taſted, and is that which is conſtantly uſed on board the veſſels that traverſe it.

It is very confidently aſſerted, not only by the Indians, but alſo by great numbers of the white people who live on the ſhores of Lake Ontario, that the waters of this lake riſe and fall alternately every ſeventh year; others, on the contrary, deny that ſuch a fluctuation does take place; and indeed it differs ſo materially from any that has been obſerved in large bodies of water in other parts of the globe, that for my

my own part I am ſomewhat tempted to believe it is merely an imaginary change; nevertheleſs, when it is conſidered, that according to the belief of the oldeſt inhabitants of the country, ſuch a periodical ebbing and flowing of the waters of the lake takes place, and that it has never been clearly proved to the contrary, we are bound to ſuſpend our opinions on the ſubject. A gentleman, whoſe habitation was ſituated cloſe upon the borders of the lake, not far from Kingſton, and who, from the nature of his profeſſion, had more time to attend to ſuch ſubjects than the generality of the people of the country, told me, that he had obſerved the ſtate of the lake attentively for nearly fourteen years that he had reſided on the borders of it, and that he was of opinion the waters did not ebb and flow periodically; yet he acknowledged this very remarkable fact, that ſeveral of the oldeſt white inhabitants in his neighbourhood declared, previouſly to the riſing of the lake, that the year 1795 would be the high year; and that in the ſummer of that year, the lake actually did riſe to a very uncommon height. He ſaid, however, that he had reaſon to think the riſing of the lake on this occaſion was wholly owing to fortuitous circumſtances, and not to any regular eſtabliſhed law of nature; and he conceived, that if the lake had not riſen as it had done, yet the people

people would have fancied, nevertheleſs, that it was in reality higher than uſual, as he ſuppoſed they had fancied it to be on former occaſions. He was induced to form this opinion, he ſaid, from the following circumſtance: When the lake had riſen to ſuch an unuſual height in the year 1795, he examined ſeveral of the oldeſt people on the ſubject, and queſtioned them particularly as to the comparative height of the waters on this and former occaſions. They all declared that the waters were not higher than they uſually were at the time of their periodical riſing; and they affirmed, that they had themſelves ſeen them equally high before. Now a grove of trees, which ſtood adjoining to this gentleman's garden, and muſt at leaſt have been of thirty years growth, was entirely deſtroyed this year by the waters of the lake, that flowed amongſt the trees; had the lake, therefore, ever riſen ſo high before, this grove would have been then deſtroyed. This circumſtance certainly militated ſtrongly againſt the evidence which the people gave as to the height of the waters; but it only proved that the waters had riſen on this occaſion higher than they had done for thirty years preceding; it did not prove that they had not, during that term, riſen periodically above their ordinary level.

What

What Mr. Carver relates concerning this ſubject, rather tends to confirm the opinion that the waters of the lake do riſe. "I had "like," he ſays, "to have omitted a very ex- "traordinary circumſtance relative to theſe "ſtraits;" the Straits of Michillimakinac, between lakes Michigan and Huron. "Accord- "ing to obſervations made by the French, "whilſt they were in poſſeſſion of the fort "there, although there is no diurnal flood or "ebb to be perceived in theſe waters, yet from "an exact attention to their ſtate, a periodical "alteration in them has been diſcovered. It "was obſerved, that they aroſe by gradual but "almoſt imperceptible degrees, till they had "reached the height of three feet; this was "accompliſhed in ſeven years and a half; and "in the ſame ſpace of time they as gently de- "creaſed, till they had reached their former "ſituation; ſo that in fifteen years they had "completed this inexplicable revolution. At "the time I was there, the truth of theſe ob- "ſervations could not be confirmed by the "Engliſh, as they had then been only a few "years in poſſeſſion of the fort; but they all "agreed that ſome alterations in the limits "of the ſtraits was apparent." It is to be lamented that ſucceeding years have not thrown more light on the ſubject; for ſince the fort has been in our poſſeſſion, perſons competent

to determine the truth of obſervations of ſuch a nature, have never ſtaid a ſufficient length of time there to have had it in their power to do ſo.

A long ſeries of minute obſervations are neceſſary to determine poſitively whether the waters of the lake do or do not riſe and fall periodically. It is well known, for inſtance, that in wet ſeaſons the waters riſe much above their ordinary level, and that in very dry ſeaſons they ſink conſiderably below it; a cloſe attention, therefore, ought to be paid to the quantity of rain that falls, and to evaporation; and it ought to be aſcertained in what degree the height of the lake is altered thereby; otherwiſe, if the lake happened to be higher or lower than uſual on the ſeventh year, it would be impoſſible to ſay with accuracy whether it were owing to the ſtate of the weather, or to certain laws of nature that we are yet unacquainted with. At the ſame time, great attention ought to be paid to the ſtate of the winds, as well in reſpect to their direction as to their velocity, for the height of the waters of all the lakes is materially affected thereby. At Fort Erie, ſituated at the eaſtern extremity of the lake of the ſame name, I once obſerved the waters to fall full three feet in the courſe of a few hours, upon a ſudden change of the wind from the weſtward, in which direction

rection it had blown for many days, to the eaſtward. Moreover, theſe obſervations ought not only to be made at one place on the borders of any one of the lakes, but they ought to be made at ſeveral different places at the ſame time; for the waters have encroached, owing to ſome unknown cauſes, conſiderably and gradually upon the ſhores in ſome places, and receded in others. Between the ſtone houſe, in the fort at Niagara, and the lake, for inſtance, there is not at preſent a greater ſpace than ten yards, or thereabouts; though when firſt built there was an extenſive garden between them. A water battery alſo, erected ſince the commencement of the preſent war, at the bottom of the bank, beyond the walls of the fort, was ſapped away by the water in the courſe of two ſeaſons, and now ſcarcely any veſtige of it remains. At a future day, when the country becomes more populous and more wealthy, perſons will no doubt be found who will have leiſure for making the obſervations neceſſary for determining whether the lakes do or do not undergo a periodical change, but at preſent the inhabitants on the borders of them are too much engaged in commercial and agricultural purſuits to attend to matters of mere ſpeculation, which, however they might amuſe the philoſopher, could be productive of no ſolid advantages to the generality of the inhabitants of the country.

It

It is believed by many perſons that the waters of Lake Ontario not only riſe and fall periodically every ſeventh year, but that they are likewiſe influenced by a tide, which ebbs and flows frequently in the courſe of twenty-four hours. On board the veſſel in which I croſſed the lake there were ſeveral gentlemen of the country, who confidently aſſured me, that a regular tide was obſervable at the Bay of Canti; that in order to ſatisfy themſelves on the ſubject, they had ſtood for ſeveral hours together, on more than one occaſion, at a mill at the head of the bay, and that they had obſerved the waters to ebb and flow regularly every four hours, riſing to the height of fourteen inches. There can be no doubt, however, but that the frequent ebbing and flowing of the water at this place muſt be cauſed by the wind; for no ſuch regular fluctuation is obſervable at Niagara, at Kingſton, or on the open ſhores of the lake; and owing to the formation of the Bay of Canti, the height of the water muſt neceſſarily vary there with every ſlight change of the wind. The Bay of Canti is a long crooked inlet, that grows narrower at the upper end, like a funnel; not only, therefore, a change of wind up or down the bay would make a difference in the height of the water at the uppermoſt extremity of it; but owing to the waters being concentrated

there at one point, they would be seen to rise or fall, if impelled even in the same direction, whether up or down the bay, more or less forcibly at one time of the day than at another. Now it is very seldom that the wind, at any part of the day or night, would be found to blow precisely with the same force, for a given space of two hours, that it had blown for the preceding space of two hours; an appearance like a tide must therefore be seen almost constantly at the head of this bay whenever there was a breeze. I could not learn that the fluctuation had ever been observed during a perfect calm: were the waters, however, influenced by a regular tide, during a calm the tide would be most readily seen.

To return to the voyage. A few hours after we quitted Kingston, on the 7th of September, the wind died away, and during the whole night the vessel made but little way; early on the morning of the 8th, however, a fresh breeze sprang up, and before noon we lost sight of the land. Our voyage now differed in no wise from one across the ocean; the vessel was steered by the compass, the log regularly heaved, the way marked down in the log book, and an exact account kept of the procedures on board. We continued sailing, out of sight of land, until the evening of the 9th, when we had a view of the blue hills in the neigh-

bourhood of Toronto, on the northern ſide of the lake, but they ſoon diſappeared. Except at this place, the ſhores of the lake are flat and ſandy, owing to which circumſtance it is, that in traverſing the lake you are generally carried out of ſight of land in a very few hours.

At day break on the 10th the fort and town of Niagara appeared under the lee bow, and the wind being favourable, we had every proſpect before us of getting up to the town in a few hours; but ſcarcely had we reached the bar, at the mouth of Niagara River, when the wind ſuddenly ſhifted, and after endeavouring in vain to croſs it by means of tacking, we were under the neceſſity of caſting anchor at the diſtance of about two miles from the fort. The fort is ſeen to great advantage from the water; but the town being built parallel to the river, and no part of it viſible to a ſpectator on the lake, except the few ſhabby houſes at the neareſt end, it makes but a very poor appearance. Having breakfaſted, and exchanged our *habits de voyage*, for ſuch as it was proper to appear in at the capital of Upper Canada, and at the center of the beau monde of the province, the ſchooner's yawl was launched, and we were landed, together with ſuch of the paſſengers as were diſpoſed to go on ſhore, at Miſſiſſaguis Point, from whence there is an agreeable walk of one mile, partly through woods, to the town of Niagara.

This point takes its name from the Miſſiſſaguis Indians, great numbers of whom are generally encamped upon it. The Miſſiſſaguis tribe inhabits the ſhores of Lake Ontario, and it is one of the moſt numerous of this part of the country. The men are in general very ſtout, and they are eſteemed moſt excellent hunters and fiſhers; but leſs warlike, it is ſaid, than any of the neighbouring nations They are of a much darker complexion than any other Indians I ever met with; ſome of them being nearly as black as negroes. They are extremely dirty and ſlovenly in their appearance, and the women are ſtill more ſo than the men; ſuch indeed is the odour exhaled in a warm day from the rancid greaſe and fiſh oil with which the latter daub their hair, necks, and faces profuſely, that it is offenſive in the higheſt degree to approach within ſome yards of them. On arriving at Niagara, we found great numbers of theſe Indians diſperſed in knots, in different parts of the town, in great concern for the loſs of a favourite and experienced chief. This man, whoſe name was Wompakanon, had been killed, it appeared, by a white man, in a fray which happened at Toronto, near to which place is the principal village of the Miſſiſſaguis nation. The remaining chiefs immediately aſſembled their warriors, and marched down to Niagara, to make

make a formal complaint to the Britiſh government. To appeaſe their reſentment, the commanding officer of the garriſon diſtributed preſents amongſt them to a large amount, and amongſt other things they were allowed no ſmall portion of rum and proviſions, upon which the tribe feaſted, according to cuſtom, the day before we reached the town; but the rum being all conſumed, they ſeemed to feel ſeverely for the loſs of poor Wompakanon. Fear of exciting the anger of the Britiſh government would prevent them from taking revenge openly on this occaſion; but I was informed by a gentleman in the Indian department, intimately acquainted with the diſpoſitions of the Indians, that as nothing but blood is deemed ſufficient in their opinion to atone for the death of a favourite chief, they would certainly kill ſome white man, perhaps one perfectly innocent, when a favourable and ſecret opportunity offered for ſo doing, though it ſhould be twenty years afterwards.

The Miſſiſſaguis keep the inhabitants of Kingſton, of Niagara, and of the different towns on the lake, well ſupplied with fiſh and game, the value of which is eſtimated by bottles of rum and loaves of bread. A gentleman, with whom we dined at Kingſton, entertained us with a moſt excellent haunch of veniſon of a very large ſize, and a ſalmon

weighing at leaſt fifteen pounds, which he had purchaſed from one of theſe Indians for a bottle of rum and a loaf of bread *, and upon enquiry I found that the Indian thought himſelf extremely well paid, and was highly pleaſed with having made ſuch a good bargain.

The Indians catch ſalmon and other large fiſh in the following manner. Two men go together in a canoe at night; the one ſits in the ſtern and paddles, and the other ſtands with a ſpear over a flambeau placed in the head of the canoe. The fiſh, attracted by the light, come in numbers around the canoe, and the ſpearſman then takes the opportunity of ſtriking them. They are very expert at this buſineſs, ſeldom miſſing their aim.

Lake Ontario, and all the rivers which fall into it, abound with excellent ſalmon, and many different kinds of ſea-fiſh, which come up the River St. Lawrence; it alſo abounds with ſuch a great variety of freſh water fiſh, that it is ſuppoſed there are many ſorts in it which have never yet been named. In almoſt every part of the River St. Lawrence, fiſh is found in the greateſt abundance; and it is the opinion of many perſons, that if the fiſheries were properly attended to, particularly the

* Both together probably not worth more than half a dollar.

ſalmon

ſalmon fiſhery, the country would be even more enriched thereby than by the fur trade. Sea wolves and ſea cows, amphibious animals, weighing from one to two thouſand pounds each, are ſaid to have been found in Lake Ontario: of the truth of this, however, there is ſome doubt; but certain it is, that in ſailing acroſs that lake animals of an immenſe ſize are frequently ſeen playing on the ſurface of the water. Of the large fiſhes, the ſturgeon is the one moſt commonly met with, and it is not only found in Lake Ontario, but alſo in the other lakes that have no immediate communication with the ſea. The ſturgeon caught in the lakes is valuable for its oil, but it is not a well flavoured fiſh; indeed, the ſturgeon found north of James River in Virginia is in general very indifferent, and ſeldom or never eaten.

Niagara River runs nearly in a due ſouth direction, and falls into Lake Ontario on the ſouthern ſhore, about thirty miles to the eaſtward of the weſtern extremity of the lake. It is about three hundred yards wide at its mouth, and is by far the largeſt body of water flowing into Lake Ontario. On the eaſtern ſide of the river is ſituated the fort, now in the poſſeſſion of the people of the States, and on the oppoſite or Britiſh ſide the town, moſt generally known by the name of Niagara, notwith-

ſtanding that it has been named Newark by the legiſlature. The original name of the town was Niagara, it was afterwards called Lenox, then Naſſau, and afterwards Newark. It is to be lamented that the Indian names, ſo grand and ſonorous, ſhould ever have been changed for others. Newark, Kingſton, York, are poor ſubſtitutes for the original names of theſe reſpective places, Niagara, Cadaragui, Toronto. The town of Niagara hitherto has been, and is ſtill the capital of the province of Upper Canada; orders, however, had been iſſued, before our arrival there, for the removal of the ſeat of government from thence to Toronto, which was deemed a more eligible ſpot for the meeting of the legiſlative bodies, as being farther removed from the frontiers of the United States. This projected change is by no means reliſhed by the people at large, as Niagara is a much more convenient place of reſort to moſt of them than Toronto; and as the governor who propoſed the meaſure has been removed, it is imagined that it will not be put in execution. The removal of the ſeat of government from Niagara to Toronto, according to the plan laid down, was only to have been a preparatory ſtep to another alteration: a new city, to have been named London, was to have been built on the river formerly called La Trenche, but ſince called the Thames, a river

a river running into Lake St. Clair; and here the ſeat of government was ultimately to have been fixed. The ſpot marked out for the ſcite of the city poſſeſſes many local advantages. It is ſituated in a healthy fertile country, on a fine navigable river, in a central part of the province, from whence the water communication is extenſive in every direction. A few ſettlements have already been made on the banks of the river, and the tide of emigration is ſetting in ſtrongly towards that quarter; at a future day, therefore, it is by no means improbable but that this ſpot may be deemed an eligible one for the capital of the country; but to remove the ſeat of government immediately to a place little better than a wilderneſs, and ſo far from the populous parts of the province, would be a meaſure fraught with numberleſs inconveniencies to the public, and productive apparently of no eſſential advantages whatſoever.

The town of Niagara contains about ſeventy houſes, a court houſe, gaol, and a building intended for the accommodation of the legiſlative bodies. The houſes, with a few exceptions, are built of wood; thoſe next the lake are rather poor, but at the upper end of the town there are ſeveral very excellent dwellings, inhabited by the principal officers of government. Moſt of the gentlemen in official

cial ſtations in Upper Canada are Engliſhmen of education, a circumſtance which muſt render the ſociety of the capital agreeable, let it be fixed where it will. Few places in North America can boaſt of a more rapid riſe than the little town of Niagara, nearly every one of its houſes having been built within the laſt five years: it is ſtill advancing moſt rapidly in ſize, owing to the increaſe of the back country trade along the ſhores of the upper lakes, which is all carried on through the place, and alſo owing to the wonderful emigrations, into the neighbourhood, of people from the States. The motives which lead the citizens of the United States to emigrate to the Britiſh dominions have already been explained. So ſudden and ſo great has the influx of people, into the town of Niagara and its vicinity, been, that town lots, horſes, proviſions, and every neceſſary of life have riſen, within the laſt three years, nearly fifty per cent. in value.

The banks of the River Niagara are ſteep and lofty, and on the top, at each ſide of the river, are extenſive plains. The town ſtands on the ſummit of the weſtern bank, about fifty yards from the water's edge. It commands a fine view of the lake and diſtant ſhores, and its ſituation is in every reſpect pleaſing to the eye. From its ſtanding on a ſpot of ground ſo much elevated above the level

level of the water, one would imagine that it must also be a remarkably healthy place, but it is, in fact, lamentably the reverse. On arriving at the town, we were obliged to call at no less than four different taverns, before we could procure accommodations, the people at the first places we stopped at being so severely afflicted with the ague, that they could not receive us; and on enquiring, it appeared that there was not a single house in the whole town but where one or more of the inhabitants were labouring under his perplexing disorder; in some of the houses entire families were laid up, and at the fort on the opposite side of the river, the whole of the new garrison, except a corporal and nine men, was disqualified for doing duty. Each individual of our party could not but entertain very serious apprehensions for his own health, on arriving at a place where sickness was so general, but we were assured that the danger of catching the disorder was now over; that all those who were ill at present, had been confined many weeks before; and that for a fortnight past not a single person had been attacked, who had not been ill in the preceding part of the season. As a precaution, however, each one of the party took fasting, in the morning, a glass of brandy, in which was infused a teaspoonfull of Peruvian bark. This

mixture

mixture is deemed, in the country, one of the moſt certain preventatives againſt the diſorder, and few that take it, in time, regularly, and avoid the evening dews, ſuffer from it.

Not only the town of Niagara and its vicinity are unhealthy places, but almoſt every part of Upper Canada, and of the territory of the States bordering upon the lakes, is likewiſe unhealthy. The ſickly ſeaſon commences about the middle of July, and terminates about the firſt week of September, as ſoon as the nights become cold. Intermittent fevers are the moſt common diſorders; but in ſome parts of the country the inhabitants ſuffer from continual fevers, of which there are different kinds, peculiar to certain diſtricts. In the country, for inſtance, bordering upon the Geneſee River, which falls into Lake Ontario on the ſouthern ſide, a fever is common amongſt the inhabitants of a malignant nature, vulgarly called the Geneſee fever, of which many die annually: and in that bordering upon the Miami River, which falls into Lake Erie, within the north-weſtern territory of the United States, a fever of a different kind, again, is common. It does not appear that the exact nature of theſe different fevers has ever been accurately aſcertained. In the back parts of North America, in general, medical men are rarely to be met with, and indeed

indeed if they were, the ſettlements are ſo far removed from each other, that they could be of little ſervice.

It is very remarkable, that notwithſtanding that medical aſſiſtance is ſo rarely to be had in caſe of ſickneſs in the back country, yet the Americans, when they are about to change their place of abode, ſeldom or ever conſider whether the part of the country to which they are going is healthy or otherwiſe, at leaſt they are ſcarcely ever influenced in their choice of a place of reſidence either by its healthineſs or unhealthineſs. If the lands in one part of the country are ſuperior to thoſe in another in fertility; if they are in the neighbourhood of a navigable river, or ſituated conveniently to a good market; if they are cheap, and riſing in value, thither the American will gladly emigrate, let the climate be ever ſo unfriendly to the human ſyſtem. Not a year paſſes over, but what numbers of people leave the beautiful and healthy banks of the Suſquehannah River for the Geneſee country, where nine out of every ten of the inhabitants are regularly ſeized, during the autumn, with malignant fevers; but the lands bordering upon the Suſquehannah are in general poor, whereas thoſe in the Geneſee country are in many places ſo rich, that until reduced by ſucceſſive crops of Indian corn, wheat, to uſe the common

common phraſe, "will run wholly to ſtraw:" where it has been ſown in the firſt inſtance, the ſtalks have frequently been found fourteen or fifteen feet in length, two thirds of them lying on the ground.

On the margin of Niagara River, about three quarters of a mile from the town, ſtands a building called Navy Hall, erected for the accommodation of the naval officers on the lake during the winter ſeaſon, when their veſſels are laid up. Oppoſite to it there is a ſpacious wharf to protect the veſſels from the ice during the winter, and alſo to facilitate the landing of merchandize when the navigation is open. All cargoes brought up the lake, that are deſtined for Niagara, are landed here. Adjoining the wharf are very extenſive ſtores belonging to the crown, and alſo to private perſons. Navy Hall is now occupied by the troops; the fort on the oppoſite ſide of the river, where they were formerly ſtationed, having been delivered up purſuant to the late treaty between his Majeſty and the United States. The troops, however, are only to remain at the hall until a blockhouſe is erected on the top of the banks for their accommodation; this building is in a ſtate of forwardneſs, and the engineer hopes to have it finiſhed in a few months.

The fort of Niagara ſtands immediately at the

the mouth of the river, on a point of land, one ſide of which is waſhed by the river and the other by the lake. Towards the water it is ſtockaded; and behind the ſtockade, on the river ſide, a large mound of earth riſes up, at the top of which are embraſures for guns; on the land ſide it is ſecured by ſeveral batteries and redoubts, and by parallel lines of faſcines. At the gates, and in various different parts, there are ſtrong blockhouſes; and facing the lake, within the ſtockade, ſtands a large fortified ſtone houſe. The fort and outworks occupy about five acres of ground; and a garriſon of five hundred men, and at leaſt from thirty to forty pieces of ordnance, would be neceſſary to defend it properly. The federal garriſon, however, conſiſts only of fifty men; and the whole of the cannon in the place amounts merely to four ſmall field pieces, planted at the four corners of the fort. This fort was founded by the French, and conſtituted one link of that extenſive chain of poſts which they eſtabliſhed along the lakes and the weſtern waters. It was begun by the building of the ſtone houſe, after a ſolemn promiſe had been obtained from the Indians that the artificers ſhould not be interrupted whilſt they were going on with the work. The Indians readily made this promiſe, as, according to their notion, it would have been inhoſpitable

hoſpitable and unfriendly in the extreme not to have permitted a few traders to build a houſe within their territory to protect them againſt the inclemency of the ſeaſons: but they were greatly aſtoniſhed when one ſo totally different from any that they had ever ſeen before, and from any that they had an idea of, was completed; they began to ſuſpect that the ſtrangers had plans in meditation unfavourable to their intereſts, and they wiſhed to diſpoſſeſs them of their new manſion, but it was too late. In the hall of the houſe a well had been ſunk to keep it ſupplied with water; the houſe was plentifully ſtored with proviſions in caſe of a ſiege; and the doors being once cloſed, the tenants remained perfectly indifferent about every hoſtile attack the Indians could make againſt it. Fortifications to ſtrengthen the houſe were gradually erected; and by the year 1759 the place was ſo ſtrong as to reſiſt, for ſome time, the forces under the command of Sir William Johnſton. Great additions were made to the works after the fort fell into the hands of the Britiſh. The ſtone houſe is a very ſpacious building, and is now, as it was formerly, appropriated for the accommodation of the principal officers of the garriſon. In the rear of the houſe is a large apartment, commanding a magnificent view of the lake and of the diſtant hills at Toronto,

which

which formerly was the officers meſs room, and a pattern of neatneſs. The officers of the federal garriſon, however, conſider it more convenient to meſs in one of the kitchens, and this beautiful room has been ſuffered to go to ruin; indeed every part of the fort now exhibits a picture of ſlovenlineſs and neglect; and the appearance of the ſoldiers is equally devoid of neatneſs with that of their quarters. Though it was on Sunday morning that we viſited the fort, on which day it is uſual even for the men of the garriſons in the States to appear better dreſſed than on other days, yet the greater part of the men were as dirty as if they had been at work in the trenches for a week without intermiſſion: their griſly beards demonſtrated that a razor had not approached their chins for many days; their hair, to appearance, had not been combed for the ſame length of time; their linen was filthy, their guns ruſty, and their clothes ragged. That the clothes and accoutrements of the men ſhould not be better is not to be wondered at, conſidering how very badly the weſtern army of the States is appointed in every reſpect; but it is ſtrange that the officers ſhould not attend more than they do to the cleanlineſs of their men. Their garriſons on the frontiers have uniformly ſuffered more from ſickneſs than thoſe of the Britiſh; and it is to be attributed,

I ſhould imagine, in a great meaſure to their filthineſs; for the men are as ſtout and hardy, apparently, as any in the world. The weſtern army of the States has been moſt ſhamefully appointed from the very outſet. I heard General Wayne, then the commander in chief, declare at Philadelphia, that a ſhort time after they had begun their march, more than one third of his men were attacked in the woods, at the ſame period, with a dyſentery; that the ſurgeons had not even been furniſhed with a medicine cheſt; and that nothing could have ſaved the greater part of the troops from death, had not one of the young ſurgeons fortunately diſcovered, after many different things had been tried in vain, that the bark of the root of a particular ſort of yellow poplar tree was a powerful antidote to the diſorder. Many times alſo, he ſaid, his army had been on the point of ſuffering from famine in their own country, owing to the careleſſneſs of their commiſſaries. So badly indeed had the army been ſupplied, even latterly, with proviſions, that when notice was ſent to the federal general by the Britiſh officers, that they had received orders to deliver up their reſpective poſts purſuant to the treaty, and that they were prepared to do ſo whenever he was ready to take poſſeſſion of them, an anſwer was returned, that unleſs the Britiſh officers could

ſupply

ſupply his army with a conſiderable quantity of proviſions on arriving at the lakes, he could not attempt to march for many weeks. The federal army was generouſly ſupplied with fifty barrels of pork, as much as the Britiſh could poſſibly ſpare; notwithſtanding which, it did not make its appearance till a conſiderable time after the day appointed for the delivery of the poſts. The federal army is compoſed almoſt wholly of Iriſhmen and Germans, that were brought over as redemptioners, and enliſted as ſoon as they landed, before they had an opportunity of learning what great wages were given to labourers in the States. The natives of the country are too fond of making money to reſt ſatisfied with the pay of a common ſoldier.

The American prints, until the late treaty of amity was ratified, teemed with the moſt groſs abuſe of the Britiſh government, for retaining poſſeſſion of Niagara Fort, and the other military poſts on the lakes, after the independence of the States had been acknowledged, and peace concluded. It was never taken into conſideration, that if the Britiſh government had thought proper to have withdrawn its troops from the poſts at once, immediately after the definitive treaty was ſigned, the works would in all probability have been deſtroyed by the Indians, within whoſe terri-

tories they were ſituated, long before the people of the States could have taken poſſeſſion of them; for no part of their army was within hundreds of miles of the poſts, and the country through which they muſt have paſt in getting to them was a mere wilderneſs; but if the army had gained the poſts, the ſtates were in no condition, immediately after the war, to have kept in them ſuch large bodies of the military as would have been abſolutely neceſſary for their defence whilſt at enmity with the Indians, and it is by no means improbable, but that the poſts might have been ſoon abandoned. The retention of them, therefore, to the preſent day, was, in fact, a circumſtance highly beneficial to the intereſts of the States, notwithſtanding that ſuch an outcry was raiſed againſt the Britiſh on that account, inaſmuch as the Americans now find themſelves poſſeſſed of extenſive fortifications on the frontiers, in perfect repair, without having been at the expence of building them, or maintaining troops in them for the ſpace of ten years, during which period no equivalent advantages could have been derived from their poſſeſſion. It is not to be ſuppoſed, however, that the Britiſh government meant to confer a favour on her late colonies by retaining the poſts; it was well known that the people of the new ſtates would be eager, ſooner or later, to get

poſſeſſion of forts ſituated within their boundary line, and occupied by ſtrangers; and as there were particular parts of the definitive treaty which ſome of the ſtates did not ſeem very ready to comply with, the poſts were detained as a ſecurity for its due ratification on the part of the States. In the late treaty of amity and commerce, theſe differences were finally accommodated to the ſatisfaction of Great Britain, and the poſts were conſequently delivered up. On the ſurrender of them very handſome compliments were paid, in the public papers throughout the States, to the Britiſh officers, for the polite and friendly manner in which they gave them up. The gardens of the officers were all left in full bearing, and high preſervation; and all the little conveniences were ſpared, which could contribute to the comforts of the federal troops.

The generality of the people of the States were big with the idea, that the poſſeſſion of theſe places would be attended with the moſt important and immediate advantages; and in particular they were fully perſuaded, that they would thereby at once become maſters of the trade to the lakes, and of three-fourths at leaſt of the fur trade, which, they ſaid, had hitherto been ſo unjuſtly monopolized by the Britiſh merchants, to their great prejudice. They have now got poſſeſſion of them, and perceive the futility of all theſe notions.

The poſts ſurrendered are four in number; namely, Fort Oſwego, at the mouth of Oſwego River, which falls into Lake Ontario, on the ſouth ſide; Fort Niagara, at the mouth of Niagara River; Fort Detroit, on the weſtern bank of Detroit River; and Fort Michillimachinack, at the ſtraits of the ſame name, between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. From Oſwego, the firſt of theſe, we derived no benefit whatever. The neighbouring country, for miles round, was a mere foreſt; it was inhabited by but few Indians, and theſe few carried their furs to Cadaragui or Kingſton, where they got a better price for them than at Oſwego, as there were many traders there, and of courſe ſome competition amongſt them; at the ſame time, the river, at the mouth of which this fort ſtands, was always open to the people of the States, and along it a ſmall trade was carried on by them between New York and Lake Ontario, which was in no wiſe ever interrupted by the troops at the fort. By the ſurrender of this place, therefore, they have gained nothing but what they enjoyed before and the Britiſh government is ſaved the expence of keeping up a uſeleſs garriſon of fifty men.

The quantity of furs collected at Niagara is conſiderable, and the neighbourhood being populous, it is a place of no ſmall trade; but the

the town, in which this trade is carried on, being on the British side of the line, the few merchants that lived within the limits of the fort immediately crossed over to the other side, as soon as it was rumoured that the fort was to be given up. By the possession of a solitary fort, therefore, the people of the States have not gained the smallest portion of this part of the lake trade; nor is it probable that any of them will find it their interest to settle as merchants near the fort; for the British merchants, on the opposite side, as has already been shewn, can afford to sell their goods, brought up the St. Lawrence, on much lower terms than what goods brought from New York can be sold at; and as for the collecting of furs, it is not to be imagined that the Indians, who bear such a rooted hatred to the people of the States, who are attached to the British, and who are not a people ready to forsake their old friends, will carry their furs over to their enemies, and give up their connections with the men with whom they have been in the habit of dealing, and who can afford to pay them so much better than the traders on the opposite side of the water.

Detroit, of all the places which have been given up, is the most important; for it is a town, containing at least twelve hundred inhabitants. Since its surrender, however, a

new town has been laid out on the oppoſite bank of the river, eighteen miles lower down, and hither many of the traders have removed. The majority of them ſtay at Detroit; but few or none have become citizens of the States in conſequence, nor is it likely that they will, at leaſt for ſome time. In the late treaty, a particular proviſion for them was made; they were to be allowed to remain there for one year, without being called on to declare their ſentiments, and if at the end of that period they choſe to remain Britiſh ſubjects, they were not to be moleſted * in any manner, but ſuffered to carry on their trade as formerly in the fulleſt extent; the portion of the fur trade, which we ſhall loſe by the ſurrender of this place, will therefore be very inconſiderable.

The fourth poſt, Michillimachinack, is a ſmall ſtockaded fort, ſituated on an iſland.

* This part of the late treaty has by no means been ſtrictly obſerved on the part of the States. The officers of the federal army, without aſking permiſſion, and contrary to the deſire of ſeveral of the remaining Britiſh inhabitants, appropriated to their own uſe ſeveral of the houſes and ſtores of thoſe who had removed to the new town, and declared their determination of not becoming citizens of the States; and many of the inhabitants had been called on to ſerve in the militia, and to perform duties, from which, as Britiſh ſubjects, they were exempted by the articles in the treaty in their favour. When we were at Detroit, the Britiſh inhabitants met together, and drew up a memorial on the ſubject, reciting their grievances, which was committed to our care, and accordingly preſented to the Britiſh miniſter at Philadelphia.

The

The agents of the North-weſt Company of merchants at Montreal, and a few independent traders, reſided within the limits of the fort, and bartered goods there for furs brought in by different tribes of Indians, who are the ſole inhabitants of the neighbouring country. On evacuating this place, another poſt was immediately eſtabliſhed, at no great diſtance, on the Iſland of St. Joſeph, in the Straits of St. Mary, between lakes Superior and Huron, and a ſmall garriſon left there, which has ſince been augmented to upwards of fifty men. Several traders, citizens of the States, have eſtabliſhed themſelves at Michillimakinac; but as the Britiſh traders have fixed their new poſt ſo cloſe to the old one, it is nearly certain that the Indians will continue to trade with their old friends in preference, for the reaſons before mentioned.

From this ſtatement it appears evident, that the people of the States can only acquire by their new poſſeſſion a ſmall part of one branch of the fur trade, namely, of that which is carried on on one of the nearer lakes. The furs brought down from the diſtant regions in the north-weſt to the grand portage, and from thence in canoes to Montreal along the Utawa River, are what conſtitute by far the principal part, both as to quantity and value, of thoſe exported from Montreal; to talk, therefore, of their acquiring poſſeſſion of three-fourths

fourths of the fur trade by the ſurrender of the poſts on the lakes is abſurd in the extreme; neither is it likely that they will acquire any conſiderable ſhare of the lake trade in general, which, as I have already pointed out, can be carried on by the Britiſh merchants from Montreal and Quebec, by means of the St. Lawrence, with ſuch ſuperior advantage.

It is worthy of remark, that as military poſts, all thoſe lately eſtabliſhed by the Britiſh are far ſuperior, in point of ſituation, to thoſe delivered up. The ground on which the new block houſe is building, on the Britiſh ſide of Niagara River, is nine feet higher than the top of the ſtone houſe in the American fort, and it commands every part of the fort. The chief ſtrength of the old fort is on the land ſide; towards the water the works are very weak, and the whole might be battered down by a ſingle twelve pounder judiciouſly planted on the Britiſh ſide of the river. At preſent it is not propoſed to erect any other works on the Britiſh ſide of the river than the block houſe; but ſhould a fort be conſtructed hereafter, it will be placed on Miſſiſſaguis Point, a ſtill more advantageous ſituation than that on which the block houſe ſtands, as it completely commands the entrance into the river.

The new poſt on Detroit River commands the channel much more effectually than the old

old fort in the town of Detroit; veſſels cannot go up or down the river without paſſing within a very few yards of it. It is remarkable, indeed, that the French, when they firſt penetrated into this part of the country, fixed upon the ſpot choſen for this new fort, in preference to that where Detroit ſtands, and they had abſolutely begun their fort and town, when the whole party was unhappily cut off by the Indians.

The iſland of St. Joſeph, in the third place, is a more eligible ſituation for a Britiſh military poſt than Michillimakinac, inaſmuch as it commands the entrance of Lake Superior, whereas Michillimakinac only commands the entrance into Lake Michigan, which is wholly within the territory of the United States.

It is ſincerely to be hoped, however, that Great Britain and the United States may continue friends, and that we never may have occaſion to view thoſe poſts on the frontiers in any other light than as convenient places for carrying on commerce.

LETTER XXXI.

Deſcription of the River and Falls of Niagara and the Country bordering upon the Navigable Part of the River below the Falls.

Fort Chippeway, September.

AT the diſtance of eighteen miles from the town of Niagara or Newark, are thoſe remarkable Falls in Niagara River, which may juſtly be ranked amongſt the greateſt natural curioſities in the known world. The road leading from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie runs within a few hundred yards of them. This road, which is within the Britiſh dominions, is carried along the top of the lofty ſteep banks of the river; for a conſiderable way it runs cloſe to their very edge, and in paſſing along it the eye of the traveller is entertained with a variety of the moſt grand and beautiful proſpects. The river, inſtead of growing narrow as you proceed upwards, widens conſiderably: at the end of nine or ten miles it expands to the breadth of a mile, and here it aſſumes much the appearance of a lake; it is encloſed, ſeemingly on all ſides, by high hills, and the current, owing to the great depth of the water, is ſo gentle as to be ſcarcely perceptible from the top of the banks. It continues thus broad for

for a mile or two, when on a ſudden the waters are contracted between the high hills on each ſide. From hence up to the falls the current is exceedingly irregular and rapid. At the upper end of this broad part of the river, and nearly at the foot of the banks, is ſituated a ſmall village, that has been called Queenſtown, but which, in the adjacent country, is beſt known by the name of "The Landing." The lake merchant veſſels can proceed up to this village with perfect ſafety, and they commonly do ſo, to depoſit, in the ſtores there, ſuch goods as are intended to be ſent higher up the country, and to receive in return the furs, &c. that have been collected at the various poſts on lakes Huron and Erie, and ſent thither to be conveyed down to Kingſton, acroſs Lake Ontario. The portage from this place to the neareſt navigable part of Niagara River, above the Falls, is nine miles in length.

About half way up the banks, at the diſtance of a few hundred yards from Queenſtown, there is a very extenſive range of wooden barracks, which, when viewed a little way off, appears to great advantage; theſe barracks are now quite unoccupied, and it is not probable that they will ever be uſed until the climate improves: the firſt troops that were lodged in them ſickened in a very few days after their arrival; many of the men died, and had not thoſe

thoſe that remained alive been removed, purſuant to the advice of the phyſicians, to other quarters, the whole regiment might poſſibly have periſhed.

From the town of Niagara to Queenſtown, the country in the neighbourhood of the river is very level; but here it puts on a different aſpect; a confuſed range of hills, covered with oaks of an immenſe ſize, ſuddenly riſes up before you, and the road that winds up the ſide of them is ſo ſteep and rugged that it is abſolutely neceſſary for the traveller to leave his carriage, if he ſhould be in one, and proceed to the top on foot. Beyond theſe hills you again come to an unbroken level country; but the ſoil here differs materially from that on the oppoſite ſide; it conſiſts of a rich dark earth intermixed with clay, and abounding with ſtones; whereas, on the ſide next Lake Ontario, the ſoil is of a yellowiſh caſt, in ſome places inclining to gravel and in others to ſand.

From the brow of one of the hills in this ridge, which overhangs the little village of Queenſtown, the eye of the traveller is gratified with one of the fineſt proſpects that can be imagined in nature: you ſtand amidſt a clump of large oaks, a little to the left of the road, and looking downwards, perceive, through the branches of the trees with which the hill is clothed

clothed from the ſummit to the baſe, the tops of the houſes of Queenſtown, and in front of the village, the ſhips moored in the river; the ſhips are at leaſt two hundred feet below you, and their maſts appear like ſlender reeds peeping up amidſt the thick foliage of the trees. Carrying your eye forward, you may trace the river in all its windings, and finally ſee it diſembogue into Lake Ontario, between the town and the fort: the lake itſelf terminates your view in this direction, except merely at one part of the horizon, where you juſt get a glimpſe of the blue hills of Toronto. The ſhore of the river, on the right hand, remains in its natural ſtate, covered with one continued foreſt; but on the oppoſite ſide the country is interſperſed with cultivated fields and neat farm houſes down to the water's edge. The country beyond the hills is much leſs cleared than that which lies towards the town of Niagara, on the navigable part of the river.

From the ſudden change of the face of the country in the neighbourhood of Queenſtown, and the equally ſudden change in the river with reſpect to its breadth, depth, and current, conjectures have been formed, that the great falls of the river muſt originally have been ſituated at the ſpot where the waters are ſo abruptly contracted between the hills; and indeed

indeed it is highly probable that this was the caſe, for it is a fact well aſcertained, that the falls have receded very conſiderably ſince they were firſt viſited by Europeans, and that they are ſtill receding every year; but of this I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more particularly preſently.

It was at an early hour of the day that we left the town of Niagara or Newark, accompanied by the attorney general and an officer of the Britiſh engineers, in order to viſit theſe ſtupendous Falls. Every ſtep that we advanced toward them, our expectations roſe to a higher pitch; our eyes were continually on the look out for the column of white miſt which hovers over them; and an hundred times, I believe, did we ſtop our carriage in hopes of hearing their thundering ſound: neither, however, was the miſt to be ſeen, nor the ſound to be heard, when we came to the foot of the hills; nor after having croſſed over them, were our eyes or ears more gratified. This occaſioned no inconſiderable diſappointment, and we could not but expreſs our doubts to each other, that the wondrous accounts we had ſo frequently heard of the Falls were without foundation, and calculated merely to impoſe on the minds of credulous people that inhabited a diſtant part of the world. Theſe doubts were nearly confirmed, when we found that, after having

having approached within half a mile of the place, the miſt was but juſt diſcernible, and that the ſound even then was not to be heard; yet it is nevertheleſs ſtrictly true, that the tremendous noiſe of the Falls may be diſtinctly heard, at times, at the diſtance of forty miles; and the cloud formed from the ſpray may be even ſeen ſtill farther off *; but it is only when the air is very clear, and there is a fine blue ſky, which however are very common occurrences in this country, that the cloud can be ſeen at ſuch a great diſtance. The hearing of the ſound of the falls afar off alſo depends upon the ſtate of the atmoſphere; it is obſerved, that the ſound can be heard at the greateſt diſtance, juſt before a heavy fall of rain, and when the wind is in a favourable point to

* We ourſelves, ſome time afterwards, beheld the cloud with the naked eye, at no leſs a diſtance than fifty-four miles, when ſailing on Lake Erie, on board one of the king's ſhips. The day on which we ſaw it was uncommonly clear and calm, and we were ſeated on the poop of the veſſel, admiring the bold ſcenery of the ſouthern ſhore of the lake, when the commander, who had been aloft to make ſome obſervations, came to us, and pointing to a ſmall white cloud in the horizon, told us, that that was the cloud overhanging Niagara. At firſt it appeared to us that this muſt have been a mere conjecture, but on minute obſervation it was evident that the commander's information was juſt. All the other light clouds in a few minutes, flitted away to another part of the horizon, whereas this one remained ſteadily fixed in the ſame ſpot; and on looking at it through a glaſs, it was plain to ſee that the ſhape of the cloud varied every inſtant, owing to the continued riſing of the miſt from the cataract beneath.

convey the ſound toward the liſtener: the day on which we firſt approached the falls was thick and cloudy.

On that part of the road leading to Lake Erie which draws neareſt to the falls, there is a ſmall village, conſiſting of about half a dozen ſtraggling houſes: here we alighted, and having diſpoſed of our horſes, and made a ſlight repaſt, in order to prepare us for the fatigue we had to go through, we croſſed over ſome fields towards a deep hollow place ſurrounded with large trees, from the bottom of which iſſued thick volumes of whitiſh miſt, that had much the appearance of ſmoke riſing from large heaps of burning weeds. Having come to the edge of this hollow place, we deſcended a ſteep bank of about fifty yards, and then walking for ſome diſtance over a wet marſhy piece of ground, covered with thick buſhes, at laſt came to the Table Rock, ſo called from the remarkable flatneſs of its ſurface, and its bearing ſome ſimilitude to a table. This rock is ſituated a little to the front of the great fall, above the top of which it is elevated about forty feet. The view from it is truly ſublime; but before I attempt to give any idea of the nature of this view, it will be neceſſary to take a more general ſurvey of the river and falls.

Niagara River iſſues from the eaſtern extremity

tremity of Lake Erie, and after a courſe of thirty-ſix miles diſcharges itſelf into Lake Ontario, as has already been mentioned. For the firſt few miles from Lake Erie, the breadth of the river is about three hundred yards, and it is deep enough for veſſels drawing nine or ten feet water; but the current is ſo extremely rapid and irregular, and the channel ſo intricate, on account of the numberleſs large rocks in different places, that no other veſſels than bateaux ever attempt to paſs along it. As you proceed downward the river widens, no rocks are to be ſeen either along the ſhores or in the channel, and the waters glide ſmoothly along, though the current continues very ſtrong. The river runs thus evenly, and is navigable with ſafety for bateaux as far as Fort Chippeway, which is about three miles above the falls; but here the bed of it again becomes rocky, and the waters are violently agitated by paſſing down ſucceſſive rapids, ſo much ſo indeed, that were a boat by any chance to be carried but a little way beyond Chippeway, where people uſually ſtop, nothing could ſave it from being daſhed to pieces long before it came to the falls. With ſuch aſtoniſhing impetuoſity do the waves break on the rocks in theſe rapids, that the mere ſight of them from the top of the banks is ſufficient to make you ſhudder. I muſt in this place,

however, obſerve, that it is only on each ſide of the river that the waters are ſo much troubled; in the middle of it, though the current is alſo there uncommonly ſwift, yet the breakers are not ſo dangerous but boats may paſs down, if dexterouſly managed, to an iſland which divides the river at the very falls. To go down to this iſland it is neceſſary to ſet off at ſome diſtance above Chippeway, where the current is even, and to keep exactly in the middle of the river the whole way thither; if the boats were ſuffered to get out of their courſe ever ſo little, either to the right or left, it would be impoſſible to ſtem the current, and bring them again into it; they would be irreſiſtibly carried towards the falls, and deſtruction muſt inevitably follow. In returning from the iſland there is ſtill more difficulty and danger than in going to it. Notwithſtanding theſe circumſtances, numbers of perſons have the foolhardineſs to proceed to this iſland, merely for the ſake of beholding the falls from the oppoſite ſide of it, or for the ſake of having in their power to ſay that they had been upon it.

The river forces its way amidſt the rocks with redoubled impetuoſity, as it approaches towards the falls; at laſt coming to the brink of the tremendous precipice, it tumbles headlong to the bottom, without meeting with any

any interruption from rocks in its deſcent. Juſt at the precipice the river takes a conſiderable bend to the right, and the line of the falls, inſtead of extending from bank to bank in the ſhorteſt direction, runs obliquely acroſs. The width of the falls is conſiderably greater than the width of the river, admeaſured ſome way below the precipice; but the annexed plan will enable you to form a better idea of their poſition than any written deſcription whatſoever. For its great accuracy I cannot vouch, as it was done merely from the eye; ſuch as it is, however, I have ſent it to you, conceiving it better that you ſhould have a plan ſomewhat imperfect than no plan at all. On looking it over you will ſee that the river does not ruſh down the precipice in one unbroken ſheet, but that it is divided by iſlands into three diſtinct collateral falls. The moſt ſtupendous of theſe is that on the north weſtern or Britiſh ſide of the river, commonly called the Great, or Horſe-ſhoe Fall, from its bearing ſome reſemblance to the ſhape of a horſe ſhoe. The height of this is only one hundred and forty-two feet, whereas the others are each one hundred and ſixty feet high; but to its inferior height it is indebted principally for its grandeur; the precipice, and of courſe the bed of the river above it, being ſo much lower at the one

ſide than at the other, by far the greater part of the water of the river finds its way to the low ſide, and ruſhes down with greater velocity at that ſide than it does at the other, as the rapids above the precipice are ſtrongeſt there. It is from the center of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall that ariſes that prodigious cloud of miſt which may be ſeen ſo far off. The extent of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall can only be aſcertained by the eye; the general opinion of thoſe who have moſt frequently viewed it is, that it is not leſs than ſix hundred yards in circumference. The iſland which ſeparates it from the next fall is ſuppoſed to be about three hundred and fifty yards wide; the ſecond fall is about five yards wide; the next iſland about thirty yards; and the third, commonly called the Fort Schloper Fall, from being ſituated towards the ſide of the river on which that fort ſtands, is judged to admeaſure at leaſt as much as the large iſland. The whole extent of the precipice, therefore, including the iſlands, is, according to this computation, thirteen hundred and thirty-five yards. This is certainly not an exaggerated ſtatement. Some have ſuppoſed, that the line of the falls altogether exceeds an Engliſh mile. The quantity of water carried down the falls is prodigious. It will be found to amount to 670,255 tons per minute, though calculated ſimply

79
LAKE
Montgomery
Newark
Queenston
Fort Chippewa
UPPER CANADA
43
Point Abino
LAKE ERIE
Schlosser Fall
Yards Wide 163 Feet High
White Foam Skirts the Falls
STATE OF
NEW
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FALLS o
Saw & Flour Mills at Foot of the Bank
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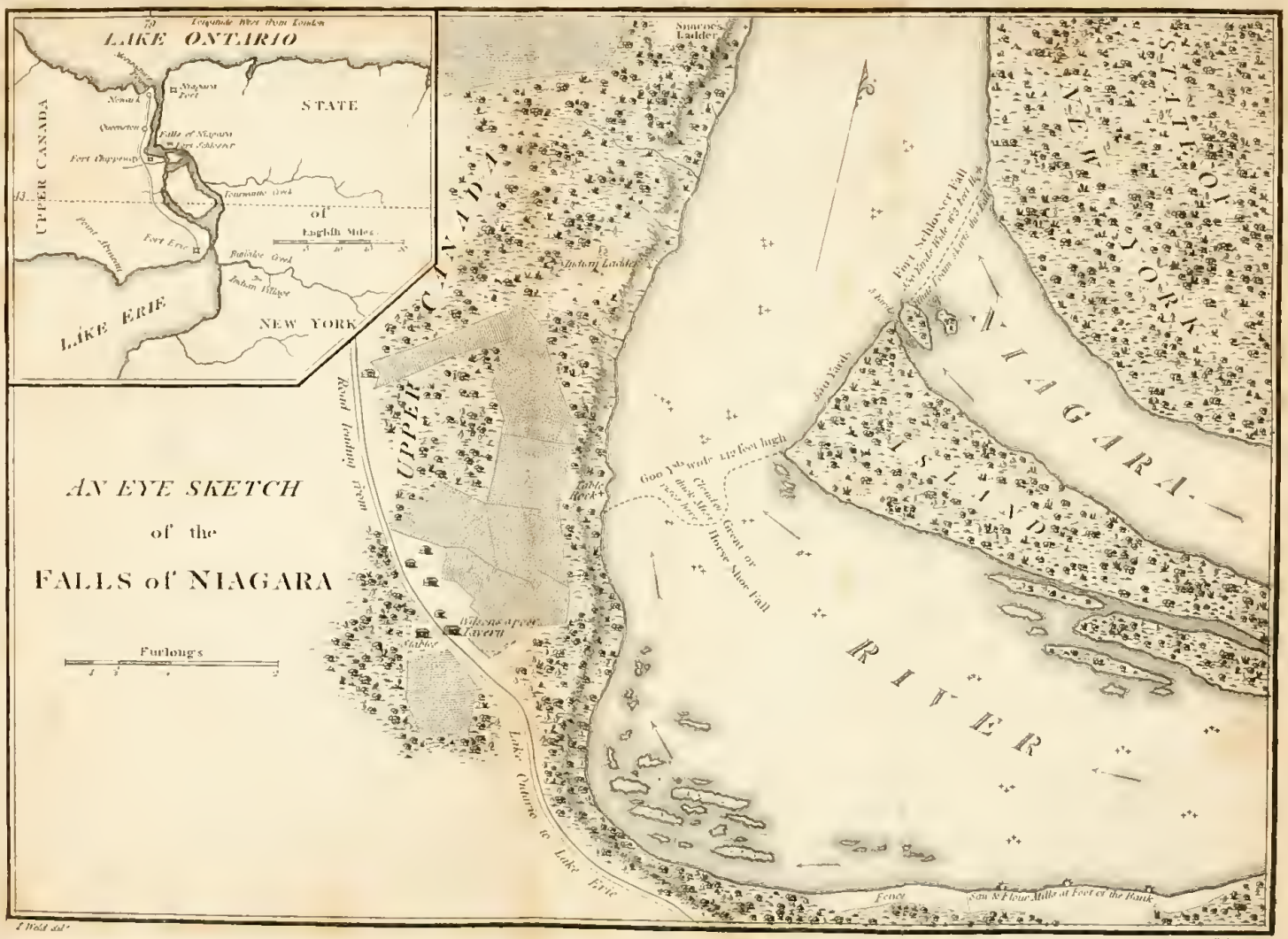

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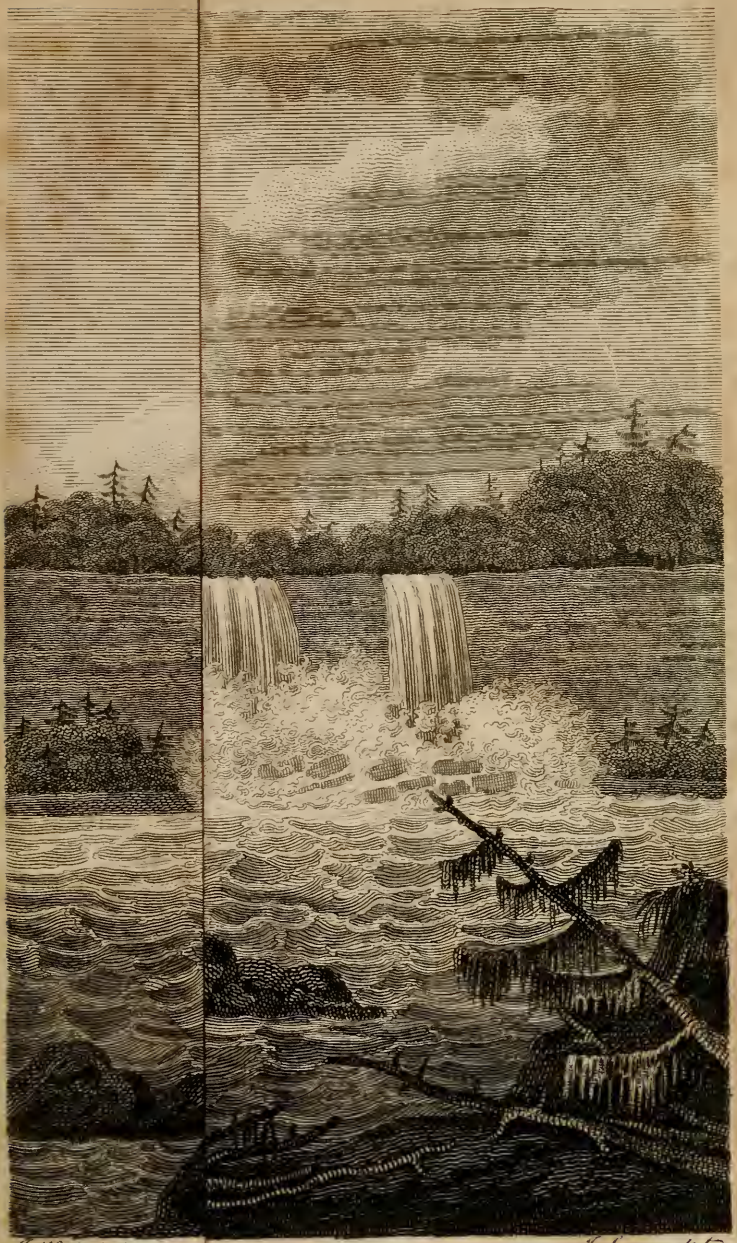

J. Weld del.t

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VIEW of the Upper FALL of NIAGARA

Published Dec 22 1795 by I Stockdale Piccadilly

ſimply from the following data, which ought to be correct, as coming from an experienced commander of one of the King's ſhips on Lake Erie, well acquainted in every reſpect with that body of water, viz. that where Lake Erie, towards its eaſtern extremity, is two miles and a half wide, the water is ſix feet deep, and the current runs at the rate of two knots in an hour; but Niagara River, between this part of Lake Erie and the falls, receives the waters of ſeveral large creeks, the quantity carried down the falls muſt therefore be greater than the foregoing computation makes it to be; if we ſay that ſix hun dred and ſeventy-two thouſand tons of water are precipitated down the falls every minute, the quantity will not probably be much overrated.

To return now to the Table Rock, ſituated on the Britiſh ſide of the river, and on the verge of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall. Here the ſpectator has an unobſtructed view of the tremendous rapids above the falls, and of the circumjacent ſhores, covered with thick woods; of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall, ſome yards below him; of the Fort Schloper Fall, at a diſtance to the left; and of the frightful gulph beneath, into which, if he has but courage to approach to the expoſed edge of the rock, he may look down perpendicularly. The aſtoniſhment excited in the mind of the ſpectator by the vaſt-

neſs of the different objects which he contemplates from hence is great indeed, and few perſons, on coming here for the firſt time, can for ſome minutes collect themſelves ſufficiently to be able to form any tolerable conception of the ſtupendous ſcene before them. It is impoſſible for the eye to embrace the whole of it at once; it muſt gradually make itſelf acquainted, in the firſt place, with the component parts of the ſcene, each one of which is in itſelf an object of wonder; and ſuch a length of time does this operation require, that many of thoſe who have had an opportunity of contemplating the ſcene at their leiſure, for years together, have thought that every time they have beheld it, each part has appeared more wonderful and more ſublime, and that it has only been at the time of their laſt viſit that they have been able to diſcover all the grandeur of the cataract.

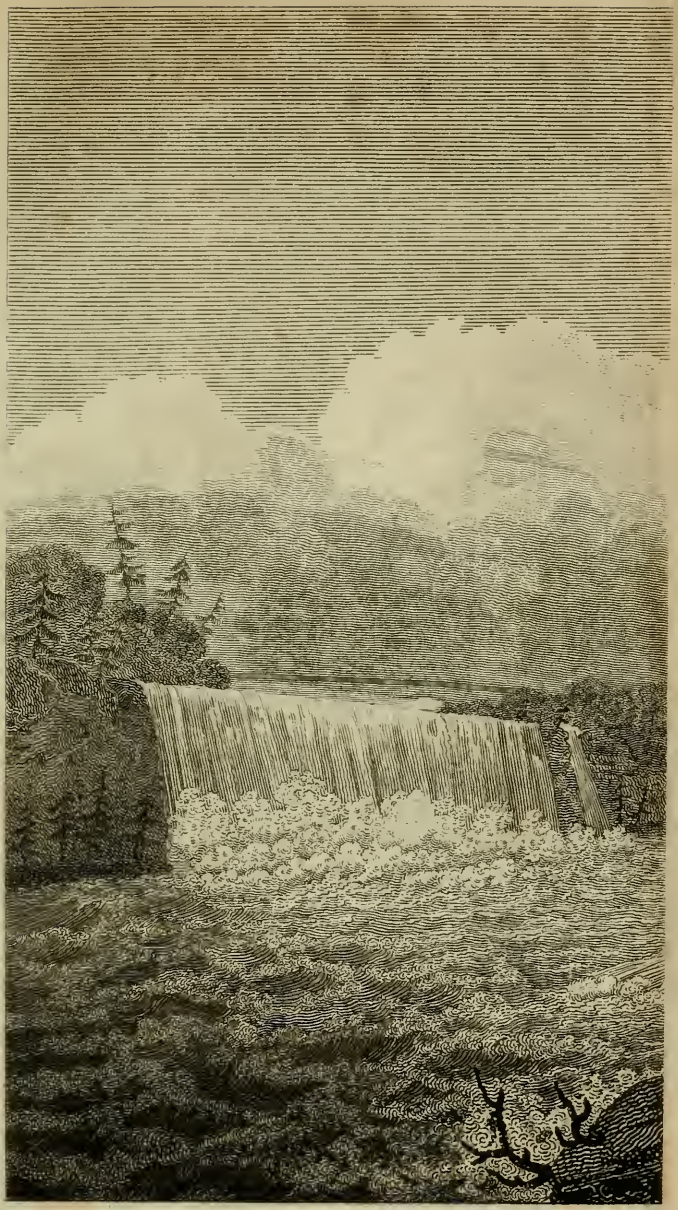
Having ſpent a conſiderable time on the Table Rock, we returned to the fields the ſame way by which we had deſcended, purſuant to the direction of the officer of engineers accompanying us, who was intimately acquainted with every part of the cataract, and of the adjoining ground, and was, perhaps, the beſt guide that could be procured in the whole country. It would be poſſible to purſue your way along the edge of the cliff, from the Table Rock,

Rock, a conſiderable way downwards; but the buſhes are ſo exceedingly thick, and the ground ſo rugged, that the taſk would be arduous in the extreme.

The next ſpot from which we ſurveyed the falls, was from the part of the cliff nearly oppoſite to that end of the Fort Schloper Fall, which lies next to the iſland. You ſtand here, on the edge of the cliff, behind ſome buſhes, the tops of which have been cut down in order to open the view. From hence you have a better proſpect of the whole cataract, and are enabled to form a more correct idea of the poſition of the precipice, than from any one other place. The proſpect from hence is more beautiful, but I think leſs grand than from any other ſpot. The officer who ſo politely directed our movements on this occaſion was ſo ſtruck with the view from this ſpot, that he once had a wooden houſe conſtructed, and drawn down here by oxen, in which he lived until he had finiſhed ſeveral different drawings of the cataract: one of theſe we were gratified with the ſight of, which exhibited a view of the cataract in the depth of winter, when in a moſt curious and wonderful ſtate. The ice at this ſeaſon of the year accumulates at the bottom of the cataract in immenſe mounds, and huge icicles, like the pillars of a maſſy building, hang pendent in many places from the top of the precipice, reaching nearly to the bottom.

Having

Having left this place, we returned once more through the woods bordering upon the precipice to the open fields, and then directed our courſe by a circuitous path, about one mile in length, to a part of the cliff where it is poſſible to deſcend to the bottom of the cataract. The river, for many miles below the precipice, is bounded on each ſide by ſteep, and in moſt parts perpendicular, cliffs, formed of earth and rocks, and it is impoſſible to deſcend to the bottom of them, except at two places, where large maſſes of earth and rocks have crumbled down, and ladders have been placed from one break to another, for the accommodation of paſſengers. The firſt of theſe places which you come to in walking along the river, from the Horſe-ſhoe Fall downwards, is called the "Indian Ladder," the ladders having been conſtructed there by the Indians. Theſe ladders, as they are called, of which there are ſeveral, one below the other, conſiſt ſimply of long pine trees, with notches cut in their ſides, for the paſſenger to reſt his feet on. The trees, even when firſt placed there, would vibrate as you ſtepped upon them, owing to their being ſo long and ſlender; age has rendered them ſtill leſs firm, and they now certainly cannot be deemed ſafe, though many perſons are ſtill in the habit of deſcending by their means. We did not attempt to get to



J. Weld del.

VIEW of the FALLS of NIAGARA

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the bottom of the cliff by this route, but proceeded to the other place, which is lower down the river, called Mrs. Simcoe's Ladder, the ladders having been originally placed there for the accommodation of the lady of the late governor. This route is much more frequented than the other; the ladders, properly so called, are strong, and firmly placed, and none of them, owing to the frequent breaks in the cliff, are required to be of such a great length but what even a lady might pass up or down them without fear of danger. To descend over the rugged rocks, however, the whole way down to the bottom of the cliff, is certainly no trifling undertaking, and few ladies, I believe, could be found of sufficient strength of body to encounter the fatigue of such an expedition.

On arriving at the bottom of the cliff, you find yourself in the midst of huge piles of mishapen rocks, with great masses of earth and rocks projecting from the side of the cliff, and overgrown with pines and cedars hanging over your head, apparently ready to crumble down and crush you to atoms. Many of the large trees grow with their heads downwards, being suspended by their roots, which had taken such a firm hold in the ground at the top of the cliff, that when part of it gave way the trees did not fall altogether. The river before

you

you here is ſomewhat more than a quarter of a mile wide; and on the oppoſite ſide of it, a little to the right, the Fort Schloper Fall is ſeen to great advantage; what you ſee of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall alſo appears in a very favourable point of view; the projecting cliff conceals nearly one half of it. The Fort Schloper Fall is ſkirted at bottom by milk white foam, which aſcends in thick volumes from the rocks; but it is not ſeen to riſe above the fall like a cloud of ſmoke, as is the caſe at the Horſe-ſhoe Fall; nevertheleſs the ſpray is ſo conſiderable, that it deſcends on the oppoſite ſide of the river, at the foot of Simcoe's Ladder, like rain.

Having reached the margin of the river, we proceeded towards the Great Fall, along the ſtrand, which for a conſiderable part of the way thither conſiſts of horizontal beds of limeſtone rock, covered with gravel, except, indeed, where great piles of ſtones have fallen from the ſides of the cliff. Theſe horizontal beds of rock, in ſome places, extend very far into the river, forming points which break the force of the current, and occaſion ſtrong eddies along particular parts of the ſhore. Here great numbers of the bodies of fiſhes, ſquirrels, foxes, and various other animals, that, unable to ſtem the current of the river above the falls, have been carried down them,

and

and conſequently killed, are waſhed up. The ſhore is likewiſe found ſtrewed with trees, and large pieces of timber, that have been ſwept away from the ſaw mills above the falls, and carried down the precipice. The timber is generally terribly ſhattered, and the carcaſes of all the large animals, particularly of the large fiſhes, are found very much bruiſed. A dreadful ſtench ariſes from the quantity of putrid matter lying on the ſhore, and numberleſs birds of prey, attracted by it, are always ſeen hovering about the place.

Amongſt the numerous ſtories current in the country, relating to this wonderful cataract, there is one that records the hapleſs fate of a poor Indian, which I ſelect, as the truth of it is unqueſtionable. The unfortunate hero of this tale, intoxicated, it ſeems, with ſpirits, had laid himſelf down to ſleep in the bottom of his canoe, which was faſtened to the beach at the diſtance of ſome miles above the falls. His ſquaw ſat on the ſhore to watch him. Whilſt they were in this ſituation, a ſailor from one of the ſhips of war on the neighbouring lakes happened to paſs by; he was ſtruck with the charms of the ſquaw, and inſtantly determined upon enjoying them. The faithful creature, however, unwilling to gratify his deſires, haſtened to the canoe to arouſe her huſband; but before ſhe could effect her purpoſe,

poſe, the ſailor cut the cord by which the canoe was faſtened, and ſet it adrift. It quickly floated away with the ſtream from the fatal ſpot, and ere many minutes elapſed, was carried down into the midſt of the rapids. Here it was diſtinctly ſeen by ſeveral perſons that were ſtanding on the adjacent ſhore, whoſe attention had been caught by the ſingularity of the appearance of a canoe in ſuch a part of the river. The violent motion of the waves ſoon awoke the Indian; he ſtarted up, looked wildly around, and perceiving his danger, inſtantly ſeized his paddle, and made the moſt ſurpriſing exertions to ſave himſelf; but finding in a little time that all his efforts would be of no avail in ſtemming the impetuoſity of the current, he with great compoſure put aſide his paddle, wrapt himſelf up in his blanket, and again laid himſelf down in the bottom of the canoe. In a few ſeconds he was hurried down the precipice; but neither he nor his canoe were ever ſeen more. It is ſuppoſed that not more than one third of the different things that happen to be carried down the falls reappear at bottom.

From the foot of Simcoe's Ladder you may walk along the ſtrand for ſome diſtance without inconvenience; but as you approach the Horſe-ſhoe Fall, the way becomes more and more rugged. In ſome places, where the cliff has

has crumbled down, huge mounds of earth, rocks, and trees, reaching to the water's edge, oppose your course; it seems impossible to pass them; and, indeed, without a guide, a stranger would never find his way to the opposite side; for to get there it is necessary to mount nearly to their top, and then to crawl on your hands and knees through long dark holes, where passages are left open between the torn up rocks and trees. After passing these mounds, you have to climb from rock to rock close under the cliff, for there is but little space here between the cliff and the river, and these rocks are so slippery, owing to the continual moisture from the spray, which descends very heavily, that without the utmost precaution it is scarcely possible to escape a fall. At the distance of a quarter of a mile from the Great Fall we were as wet, owing to the spray, as if each of us had been thrown into the river.

There is nothing whatsoever to prevent you from passing to the very foot of the Great Fall; and you might even proceed behind the prodigious sheet of water that comes pouring down from the top of the precipice, for the water falls from the edge of a projecting rock; and, moreover, caverns of a very considerable size have been hollowed out of the rocks at the bottom of the precipice, owing to the violent ebullition

ebullition of the water, which extend ſome way underneath the bed of the upper part of the river. I advanced within about ſix yards of the edge of the ſheet of water, juſt far enough to peep into the caverns behind it; but here my breath was nearly taken away by the violent whirlwind that always rages at the bottom of the cataract, occaſioned by the concuſſion of ſuch a vaſt body of water againſt the rocks. I confeſs I had no inclination at the time to go farther; nor, indeed, any of us afterwards attempted to explore the dreary confines of theſe caverns, where death ſeemed to await him that ſhould be daring enough to enter their threatening jaws. No words can convey an adequate idea of the awful grandeur of the ſcene at this place. Your ſenſes are appalled by the ſight of the immenſe body of water that comes pouring down ſo cloſely to you from the top of the ſtupendous precipice, and by the thundering ſound of the billows daſhing againſt the rocky ſides of the caverns below; you tremble with reverential fear, when you conſider that a blaſt of the whirlwind might ſweep you from off the ſlippery rocks on which you ſtand, and precipitate you into the dreadful gulph beneath, from whence all the power of man could not extricate you; you feel what an inſignificant being you are in the creation, and your mind is forcibly impreſſed with an awful

idea

idea of the power of that mighty Being who commanded the waters to flow.

Since the Falls of Niagara were firſt diſcovered they have receded very conſiderably, owing to the diſrupture of the rocks which form the precipice. The rocks at bottom are firſt looſened by the conſtant action of the water upon them; they are afterwards carried away, and thoſe at top being thus undermined, are ſoon broken by the weight of the water ruſhing over them: even within the memory of many of the preſent inhabitants of the country, the falls have receded ſeveral yards. The commodore of the King's veſſels on Lake Erie, who had been employed on that lake for upwards of thirty years, informed me, that when he firſt came into the country it was a common practice for young men to go to the iſland in the middle of the falls; that after dining there, they uſed frequently to dare each other to walk into the river towards certain large rocks in the midſt of the rapids, not far from the edge of the falls; and ſometimes to proceed through the water, even beyond theſe rocks. No ſuch rocks are to be ſeen at preſent; and were a man to advance two yards into the river from the iſland, he would be inevitably ſwept away by the torrent. It has been conjectured, as I before mentioned, that the Falls of Niagara

gara were originally ſituated at Queenſtown; and indeed the more pains you take to examine the courſe of the river from the preſent falls downward, the more reaſon is there to imagine that ſuch a conjecture is well founded. From the precipice nearly down to Queenſtown, the bed of the river is ſtrewed with large rocks, and the banks are broken and rugged; circumſtances which plainly denote that ſome great diſruption has taken place along this part of the river; and we need be at no loſs to account for it, as there are evident marks of the action of water upon the ſides of the banks, and conſiderably above their preſent baſes. Now the river has never been known to riſe near theſe marks during the greateſt floods; it is plain, therefore, that its bed muſt have been once much more elevated than it is at preſent. Below Queenſtown, however, there are no traces on the banks to lead us to imagine that the level of the water was ever much higher there than it is now. The ſudden increaſe of the depth of the river juſt below the hills at Queenſtown, and its ſudden expanſion there at the ſame time, ſeem to indicate that the waters muſt for a great length of time have fallen from the top of the hills, and thus have formed that extenſive deep baſin below the village. In the river, a mile or two above

Queen-

Queenſtown, there is a tremendous whirlpool, owing to a deep hole in the bed; this hole was probably alſo formed by the waters falling for a great length of time on the ſame ſpot, in conſequence of the rocks which compoſed the then precipice having remained firmer than thoſe at any other place did. Tradition tells us, that the great fall, inſtead of having been in the form of a horſe ſhoe, once projected in the middle. For a century paſt, however, it has remained nearly in the preſent form; and as the ebullition of the water at the bottom of the cataract is ſo much greater at the center of this fall than in any other part, and as the water conſequently acts with more force there in undermining the precipice than at any other part, it is not unlikely that it may remain nearly in the ſame form for ages to come.

At the bottom of the Horſe-ſhoe Fall is found a kind of white concrete ſubſtance, by the people of the country, called ſpray. Some perſons have ſuppoſed that it is formed from the earthy particles of the water, which deſcending, owing to their great ſpecific gravity, quicker than the other particles, adhere to the rocks, and are there formed into a maſs. This concrete ſubſtance has preciſely the appearance of petrified froth; and it is remarkable, that it is found adhering to thoſe rocks againſt which the greateſt quantities of the

froth, that floats upon the water, is waſhed by the eddies.

We did not think of aſcending the cliff till the evening was far advanced, and had it been poſſible to have found our way up in the dark, I verily believe we ſhould have remained at the bottom of it until midnight. Juſt as we left the foot of the great fall the ſun broke through the clouds, and one of the moſt beautiful and perfect rainbows that ever I beheld was exhibited in the ſpray that aroſe from the fall. It is only at evening and morning that the rainbow is ſeen in perfection; for the banks of the river, and the ſteep precipice, ſhade the ſun from the ſpray at the bottom of the fall in the middle of the day.

At a great diſtance from the foot of the ladder we halted, and one of the party was diſpatched to fetch a bottle of brandy and a pair of goblets, which had been depoſited under ſome ſtones on the margin of the river, in our way to the great fall, whither it would have been highly inconvenient to have carried them. Wet from head to foot, and greatly fatigued, there certainly was not one amongſt us that appeared, at the moment, deſirous of getting the brandy, in order to pour out a libation to the tutelary deities of the cataract; nor indeed was there much reaſon to apprehend that our piety would have ſhone forth more conſpicuouſly afterwards;

wards; however it was not put to the teſt; for the meſſenger returned in a few minutes with the woeful intelligence that the brandy and goblets had been ſtolen. We were at no great loſs in gueſſing who the thieves were. Perched on the rocks, at a little diſtance from us, ſat a pair of the river nymphs, not "nymphs with ſedged crowns and ever "harmleſs looks;" not "temperate nymphs," but a pair of ſquat ſturdy old wenches, that with cloſe bonnets and tucked up petticoats had crawled down the cliff, and were buſied with long rods in angling for fiſh. Their noiſy clack plainly indicated that they had been well pleaſed with the brandy, and that we ought not to entertain any hopes of recovering the ſpoil; we e'en ſlaked our thirſt, therefore, with a draught from the wholeſome flood, and having done ſo, boldly puſhed forward, and before it was quite dark regained the habitations from whence we had ſtarted.

On returning we found a well-ſpread table laid out for us in the porch of the houſe, and having gratified the keen appetite which the fatigue we had encountered had excited, our friendly guides, having previouſly given us inſtructions for examining the falls more particularly, ſet off by moonlight for Niagara, and we repaired to Fort Chippeway, three miles above the falls, which place we made our

head-quarters while we remained in the neighbourhood, becauſe there was a tolerable tavern, and no houſe in the village near the falls, where ſickneſs was not prevalent.

The Falls of Niagara are much leſs difficult of acceſs now than they were ſome years ago. Charlevoix, who viſited them in the year 1720, tells us, that they were only to be viewed from one ſpot; and that from thence the ſpectator had only a ſide proſpect of them. Had he been able to have deſcended to the bottom, he would have had ocular demonſtration of the exiſtence of caverns underneath the precipice, which he ſuppoſed to be the caſe from the hollow ſound of the falling of the waters; from the number of carcaſes waſhed up there on different parts of the ſtrand, and would alſo have been convinced of the truth of a circumſtance which he totally diſbelieved, namely, that fiſh were oftentimes unable to ſtem the rapid current above the falls, and were conſequently carried down the precipice.

The moſt favourable ſeaſon for viſiting the falls is about the middle of September, the time when we ſaw them; for then the woods are ſeen in all their glory, beautifully variegated with the rich tints of autumn; and the ſpectator is not then annoyed with vermin. In the ſummer ſeaſon you meet with rattleſnakes at every ſtep, and muſquitoes ſwarm ſo thickly

thickly in the air, that to uſe a common phraſe of the country, "you might cut them with "a knife." The cold nights in the beginning of September effectually baniſh theſe noxious animals.

LETTER XXXII.

Deſcription of Fort Chippeway.—Plan in meditation to cut a Canal to avoid the Portage at the Falls of Niagara.—Departure from Chippeway.—Intenſe Heat of the Weather.—Deſcription of the Country bordering on Niagara River above the Falls.—Obſervations on the Climate of Upper Canada.—Rattleſnakes common in Upper Canada.—Fort Erie.—Miſerable Accommodation there.—Squirrel hunting.—Seneka Indians.—Their Expertneſs at the Uſe of the Blow-gun.—Deſcription of the Blow-gun.—Excurſion to the Village of the Senekas.—Whole Nation abſent.—Paſſage of a dangerous Sand Bar at the Mouth of Buffalo Creek.—Sail from Fort Erie.—Driven back by a Storm.—Anchor under Point Abineau.—Deſcription of the Point.—Curious Sand Hills there.—Bear hunting.—How carried on.—Dogs, what Sort of, uſed.—Wind

changes.—The Veſſel ſuffers from the Storm whilſt at Anchor.—Departure from Point Abineau.—General Deſcription of Lake Erie.—Anecdote.—Reach the Iſlands at the Weſtern End of the Lake.—Anchor there.—Deſcription of the Iſlands.—Serpents of various Kinds found there.—Rattleſnakes.—Medicinal Uſes made of them.—Fabulous Accounts of Serpents.—Departure from the Iſlands.—Arrival at Malden.—Detroit River.

Malden, October.

FORT CHIPPEWAY, from whence my laſt letter was dated, is a ſmall ſtockaded fort, ſituated on the borders of a creek of the ſame name, about two hundred yards diſtant from Niagara River. Had it been built immediately on the latter ſtream, its ſituation would have been much more convenient; for the water of the creek is ſo bad that it cannot be drank, and the garriſon is obliged to draw water daily from the river. The fort, which occupies about one rood of ground only, conſiſts of a ſmall block houſe, incloſed by a ſtockade of cedar poſts about twelve feet high, which is merely ſufficient to defend the garriſon againſt muſquet ſhot. Adjoining to the fort there are about ſeven or eight farm houſes, and ſome large ſtone houſes, where goods are depoſited preparatory to their being conveyed up the

the river in bateaux, or acroſs the portage in carts, to Queenſtown. It is ſaid that it would be practicable to cut a canal from hence to Queenſtown, by means of which the troubleſome and expenſive proceſs of unlading the bateaux and tranſporting the goods in carts along the portage would be avoided. Such a canal will in all probability be undertaken one day or other; but whenever that ſhall be the caſe, there is reaſon to think that it will be cut on the New York ſide of the river for two reaſons; firſt, becauſe the ground on that ſide is much more favourable for ſuch an undertaking; and, ſecondly, becauſe the ſtate of New York is much more populous, and far better enabled to advance the large ſums of money that would be requiſite for cutting a canal through ſuch rugged ground as borders upon the river, than the province of Upper Canada either is at preſent, or appears likely to be.

About fifteen men, under the command of a lieutenant, are uſually quartered at Fort Chippeway, who are moſtly employed in conducting, in bateaux from thence to Fort Erie, the ſtores for the troops in the upper country, and the preſents for the Indians.

After we had gratified our curioſity in regard to the wonderous objects in the neighbourhood, at leaſt as far as our time would permit, we were obligingly furniſhed with a

bateau

bateau by the officer at Fort Chippeway, to whom we carried letters, to convey us to Fort Erie. My companions embarked in it with our baggage, when the morning appointed for our departure arrived; but desirous of taking one more look at the Falls, I staid behind, determining to follow them on foot in the course of the day; I accordingly walked down to the falls from Fort Chippeway after breakfast, spent an hour or two there, returned to the fort, and having stopped a short time to rest myself after the fatigues of climbing the steeps about the falls, I set out for Fort Erie, fifteen miles distant from Chippeway, accompanied by my faithful servant Edward, who has indeed been a treasure to me since I have been in America. The day was by no means favourable for a pedestrian expedition; it was intensely hot, and we had not proceeded far before we found the necessity of taking off our jackets, waistcoats, and cravats, and carrying them in a bundle on our backs. Several parties of Indians that I met going down the river in canoes were stark naked.

The banks of Niagara River, between Chippeway and Fort Erie, are very low, and covered, for the most part, with shrubs, under whose shade, upon the gravelly beach of the river, the weary traveller finds an agreeable resting place. For the first few miles from Chippeway

Chippeway there are ſcarcely any houſes to be ſeen; but about half way between that place and Fort Erie they are thickly ſcattered along the banks of the river. The houſes in this neighbourhood were remarkably well built, and appeared to be kept in a ſtate of great neatneſs; moſt of them were ſheathed with boards, and painted white. The lands adjoining them are rich, and were well cultivated. The crops of Indian corn were ſtill ſtanding here, which had a moſt luxuriant aſpect; in many of the fields there did not appear to be a ſtem leſs than eight feet in height. Between the rows they ſow gourds, ſquaſhes, and melons, of which laſt every ſort attains to a ſtate of great perfection in the open air throughout the inhabited parts of the two provinces. Peaches in this part of the country likewiſe come to perfection in the open air, but in Lower Canada, the ſummers are too ſhort to permit them to ripen ſufficiently. The winters here are very ſevere whilſt they laſt, but it is ſeldom that the ſnow lies longer than three months on the ground. The ſummers are intenſely hot, Fahrenheit's thermometer often riſing to 96°, and ſometimes above 100°.

As I paſſed along to Fort Erie I killed a great many large ſnakes of different ſorts that I found baſking in the ſun. Amongſt them

I did not find any rattleſnakes: theſe reptiles, however, are very commonly met with here; and at the diſtance of twenty or thirty miles from the river, up the country, it is ſaid that they are ſo numerous as to render the ſurveying of land a matter of very great danger. It is a circumſtance ſtrongly in favour of Lower Canada, that the rattleſnake is not found there; it is ſeldom found, indeed, to the northward of the forty-fifth parallel of north latitude.

Fort Erie ſtands at the eaſtern extremity of Lake Erie; it is a ſmall ſtockaded fort, ſomewhat ſimilar to that at Chippeway; and adjoining it are extenſive ſtores as at Chippeway, and about half a dozen miſerable little dwellings. On arriving there I had no difficulty in diſcovering my companions; I found them lodged in a ſmall log-houſe, which contained but the one room, and juſt ſitting down to a ſupper, they had procured through the aſſiſtance of a gentleman in the Indian department, who accompanied them from Chippeway. This habitation was the property of an old woman, who in her younger days had followed the drum, and now gained her livelihood by accommodating, to the beſt of her power, ſuch travellers as paſſed by Fort Erie. A ſorry habitation it was; the crazy door was ready to drop off the hinges, and in all the three

three windows of it not one pane of glaſs was there, a young gentleman from Detroit having amuſed himſelf, whilſt detained in the place by contrary winds, ſome little time before our arrival, with ſhooting arrows through them. It was not likely that theſe windows would be ſpeedily repaired, for no glazier was to be met with nearer than Newark, thirty-ſix miles diſtant. Here, as we lay folded in our ſkins on the floor, the rain beat in upon us, and the wind whiſtled about our ears; but this was not the worſt. In the morning we found it a difficult matter to get wherewith to ſatisfy our hunger; dinner was more difficult to be had than breakfaſt, ſupper than dinner; there ſeemed to be a greater ſcarcity of proviſions alſo the ſecond day than there was on the firſt. At laſt, fearing that we ſhould be famiſhed if we remained longer under the care of old mother Palmer, we embarked at once on board the veſſel of war in which we intended to croſs the lake, where although ſometimes toſſed about by the raging contrary winds, yet we had comfortable births, and fared plenteouſly every day.

Ships lie oppoſite to Fort Erie, at the diſtance of about one hundred yards from the ſhore; they are there expoſed to all the violence of the weſterly winds, but the anchorage is excellent, and they ride in perfect ſafety. Three veſſels

of

of war, of about two hundred tons, and carrying from eight to twelve guns each, beſides two or three merchant veſſels, lay wind bound whilſt we remained here. The little fort, with the ſurrounding houſes built on the rocky ſhore, the veſſels lying at anchor before it, the rich woods, the diſtant hills on the oppoſite ſide of the lake, and the vaſt lake itſelf, extending to the fartheſt part of the horizon, altogether formed an intereſting and beautiful ſcene.

Whilſt we were detained here by contrary winds, we regularly went on ſhore after breakfaſt to take a ramble in the woods; oftentimes alſo we amuſed ourſelves with the diverſion of hunting ſquirrels with dogs, amongſt the ſhrubs and young trees on the borders of the lake, thouſands of which animals we found in the neighbourhood of the fort. The ſquirrels, alarmed by the barking of the dogs, leap from tree to tree with wonderful ſwiftneſs; you follow them cloſely, ſhaking the trees, and ſtriking againſt the branches with poles. Sometimes they will lead you a chace of a quarter of a mile and more; but ſooner or later, terrified by your attentive purſuit, make a falſe leap, and come to the ground; the dogs, ever on the watch, then ſeize the opportunity to lay hold of them; frequently, however, the ſquirrels will elude their repeated ſnaps, and mount

mount another tree before you can look round you. I have ſeldom known them to be hurt by their fall, notwithſtanding that I have many times ſeen them tumble from branches of trees upwards of twenty feet from the ground.

In our rambles we uſed frequently to fall in with parties of the Seneka Indians, from the oppoſite ſide of the lake, that were amuſing themſelves with hunting and ſhooting theſe animals. They ſhot them principally with bows and blow-guns, at the uſe of which laſt the Senekas are wonderfully expert. The blow-gun is a narrow tube, commonly about ſix feet in length, made of a cane reed, or of ſome pithy wood, through which they drive ſhort ſlender arrows by the force of the breath. The arrows are not much thicker than the lower ſtring of a violin; they are headed generally with little triangular bits of tin, and round the oppoſite ends, for the length of two inches, a quantity of the down of thiſtles, or ſomething very like it, is bound, ſo as to leave the arrows at this part of ſuch a thickneſs that they may but barely paſs into the tube. The arrows are put in at the end of the tube that is held next to the mouth, the down catches the breath, and with a ſmart puff they will fly to the diſtance of fifty yards. I have followed young Seneka Indians, whilſt ſhooting with blow-guns, for hours together, during which time

time I have never known them once to miſs their aim, at the diſtance of ten or fifteen yards, although they ſhot at the little red ſquirrels, which are not half the ſize of a rat; and with ſuch wonderful force uſed they to blow forth the arrows, that they frequently drove them up to the very thiſtle-down through the heads of the largeſt black ſquirrels. The effect of theſe guns appears at firſt like magic. The tube is put to the mouth, and in the twinkling of an eye you ſee the ſquirrel that is aimed at fall lifeleſs to the ground; no report, not the ſmalleſt noiſe even, is to be heard, nor is it poſſible to ſee the arrow, ſo quickly does it fly, until it appears faſtened in the body of the animal.

The Seneka is one of the ſix nations which formerly bore the general name of the Iroquois Indians. Their principal village is ſituated on Buffalo Creek, which falls into the eaſtern extremity of Lake Erie, on the New York ſhore. We took the ſhip's boat one morning, and went over to viſit it, but all the Indians, men, women, and children, amounting in all to upwards of ſix hundred perſons, had, at an early hour, gone down to Fort Niagara, to partake of a feaſt which was there prepared for them. We walked about in the neighbourhood of the village, dined on the graſs on ſome cold proviſions that we had taken with us, and in the evening, returned.

Oppoſite

Oppoſite to the mouth of Buffalo Creek there is a very dangerous ſand bar, which at times it is totally impoſſible to paſs in any other veſſels than bateaux; we found it no eaſy matter to get over it in the ſhip's long boat with four oars on going into the creek; and in returning the paſſage was really tremendous. The wind, which was weſterly, and of courſe impelled the vaſt body of water in the lake towards the mouth of the creek, had increaſed conſiderably whilſt we had been on ſhore, and the waves had begun to break with ſuch fury over the bar, that it was not without a conſiderable ſhare of terror that we contemplated the proſpect of paſſing through them: the commodore of the King's ſhips on the lake, who was at the helm, was determined, however, to croſs the bar that night, and accordingly, a ſtrict ſilence having been enjoined, that the crew might hear his orders, we boldly entered into the midſt of the breakers: the boat now rolled about in a moſt alarming manner; ſometimes it mounted into the air on the top of the mighty billows, at other times it came thumping down with prodigious force on the bar; at laſt it ſtuck quite faſt in the ſand; neither oars nor rudder were any longer of uſe, and for a moment we gave ourſelves over for loſt; the waves that rolled towards us broke on all ſides with a noiſe like that of

thunder, and we were expecting that the boat would be overwhelmed by ſome one or other of them every inſtant, when luckily a large wave, that rolled on a little farther than the reſt without breaking into foam, ſet us again afloat, and the oarſmen making at that moment the moſt vigorous exertions, we once more got into deep water; it was not, however, until after many minutes that we were ſafely out of the tremendous ſurf. A boat, with a pair of oars only, that attempted to follow us, was overwhelmed in an inſtant by a wave which broke over her: it was in vain to think of attempting to give any aſſiſtance to her crew, and we were obliged for a time to endure the painful thought that they might be ſtruggling with death within a few yards of us; but before we loſt ſight of the ſhore we had the ſatisfaction of beholding them all ſtanding in ſafety on the beach, which they had reached by ſwimming.

After having been detained about ſeven days at Fort Erie, the wind veered about in our favour, the ſignal gun was fired, the paſſengers repaired on board, and at half an hour before ſun-ſet we launched forth into the lake. It was much ſuch another evening as that on which we left Kingſton; the vaſt lake, bounded only by the horizon, glowed with the rich warm tints that were reflected in its unruffled ſurface

ſurface from the weſtern ſky ; and the top of the tall foreſt, adorning the ſhores, appeared fringed with gold, as the ſun ſunk down behind it. There was but little wind during the firſt part of the night ; but afterwards a freſh breeze ſprang up, and by ten o'clock the next morning we found ourſelves forty miles diſtant from the fort: the proſperous gale, however, did not long continue, the ſky became overcaſt, the waves began to roll with fury, and the captain judging it adviſable to ſeek a place of ſhelter againſt the impending ſtorm, the ſhip was put about, and with all poſſible expedition meaſured back the way which we had juſt made with ſo much pleaſure. We did not return, however, the whole way to Fort Erie, but run into a ſmall bay on the ſame ſide of the lake, about ten miles diſtant, ſheltered by Point Abineau: by three o'clock in the afternoon the veſſel was ſafely moored, and this buſineſs having been accompliſhed, we proceeded in the long boat to the ſhore, which was about two miles off.

Point Abineau is a long narrow neck of land, which projects into the lake nearly in a due ſouth direction ; on each ſide of it there is an extenſive bay, which affords good anchorage ; the extremity of the point is covered with rocks, lying horizontally in beds, and extending a conſiderable way into the lake, nearly

even with the ſurface of the water, ſo that it is only in a few places that boats can approach the ſhore. The rocks are of a ſlate colour, but ſpotted and ſtreaked in various directions with a dirty yellow; in many places they are perforated with ſmall holes, as if they had been expoſed to the action of fire. The ſhores of the bays, on the contrary, are covered with ſand; on digging to the depth of a few feet, however, I ſhould imagine that in moſt parts of the ſhore the ſame ſort of rocks would be found as thoſe ſeen on the extremity of the point; for where the ſandy part of the ſhore commences, it is evident that the rocks have been covered by the ſand which has been waſhed up by the waves of the lake: the northern ſhore of the lake abounds very generally with rocks of the ſame deſcription.

On the weſtern ſide of Point Abineau the ſtrand differs in no wiſe, to appearance, from that of the ocean: it is ſtrewed with a variety of ſhells of a large ſize; quantities of gulls are continually ſeen hovering over it; and during a gale of wind from the weſt, a ſurge breaks in upon it, as tremendous as is to be ſeen on any part of the coaſt of England. The mounds of ſand accumulated on Point Abineau are truly aſtoniſhing; thoſe next to the lake, that have been waſhed by the ſtorms of late years, are totally devoid of verdure; but others,

ſituated behind them, towards the center of the point, ſeem coeval with the world itſelf, and are covered with oaks of the largeſt ſize from top to bottom. In general theſe mounds are of an irregular form; but in ſome places, of the greateſt height, they are ſo even and ſtraight that it appears as if they had been thrown up by the hand of art, and you may almoſt fancy them to be the old works of ſome vaſt fortification. Theſe regular mounds extend in all directions, but chiefly from north to ſouth, which demonſtrates that weſterly winds were as prevalent formerly in this part of the country as they are at the preſent day. I ſhould ſuppoſe that ſome of theſe mounds are upwards of one hundred feet above the level of the lake.

The ground on the eaſtern ſide of the point is neither ſo much broken nor ſo ſandy as that on the oppoſite one, and there we found two farm houſes, adjoining to each of which were about thirty acres of cleared land. At one of theſe we procured a couple of ſheep, ſome fowls, and a quantity of potatoes, to add to our ſtore of proviſions, as there was reaſon to apprehend that our voyage would not be ſpeedily terminated: whilſt the men were digging for the latter, the old woman of the houſe ſpread her little table, and prepared for us the beſt viands which her habitation afforded, namely,

coarſe cake bread, roaſted potatoes, and bear's fleſh ſalted, which laſt we found by no means unpalatable. The haunch of a young cub is a diſh much eſteemed, and we frequently met with it at table in the upper country; it is extremely rich and oily, nevertheleſs they ſay it never cloys the ſtomach.

Towards evening we returned to the veſſel, and the ſtorm being much abated, paſſed, not an, uncomfortable night.

At day break the next morning I took the boat, and went on ſhore to join a party that, as I had been informed the preceding evening, was going a bear-hunting. On landing, I found the men and dogs ready, and having loaded our guns we advanced into the woods. The people here, as in the back parts of the United States, devote a very great part of their time to hunting, and they are well ſkilled in the purſuit of game of every deſcription. They ſhoot almoſt univerſally with the rifle gun, and are as dextrous at the uſe of it as any men can be. The guns uſed by them are all imported from England. Thoſe in moſt eſtimation carry balls of the ſize of thirty to the pound; in the States the hunters very commonly ſhoot with balls of a much ſmaller ſize, ſixty of them not weighing more than one pound; but the people in Canada are of opinion that it is better to uſe the large balls,

balls, although more troubleſome to carry through the woods, as they inflict much more deſtructive wounds than the others, and game ſeldom eſcapes after being wounded by them. Dogs of a large ſize are choſen for bear hunting: thoſe moſt generally preferred ſeem to be of a breed between the blood hound and maſtiff; they will follow the ſcent of the bear, as indeed moſt field dogs will, but their chief uſe is to keep the bear at bay when wounded, or to follow him if he attempt to make off whilſt the hunter is reloading his gun. Bears will never attempt to attack a man or a dog while they can make their eſcape, but once wounded or cloſely hemmed in they will fight moſt furiouſly. The young ones, at ſight of a dog, generally take to a tree; but the old ones, as if conſcious of their ability to fight a dog, and at the ſame time that they cannot fail of becoming the prey of the hunter if they aſcend a tree, never do ſo, unleſs indeed they ſee a hunter coming towards them on horſeback, a ſight which terrifies them greatly.

The Indians generally go in large parties to hunt bears, and on coming to the place where they ſuppoſe theſe animals are lurking, they form themſelves into a large circle, and as they advance endeavour to rouſe them. It is ſeldom that the white hunters muſter to-

gether in ſufficient numbers to purſue their game in this manner; but whenever they have men enough to divide themſelves ſo, they always do it. We proceeded in this manner at Point Abineau, where three or four men are amply ſufficient to hem in a bear between the water and the main land. The point was a very favourable place for hunting this year, for the bears, intent, as I before mentioned, upon emigrating to the ſouth, uſed, on coming down from the upper country, to advance to the extreme end of the point, as if deſirous of getting as near as poſſible by land to the oppoſite ſide of the lake, and ſcarcely a morning came but what one or two of them were found upon it. An experienced hunter can at once diſcern the track of a bear, deer, or any other large animal, in the woods, and can tell with no ſmall degree of preciſion how long a time before, it was, that the animal paſſed that way. On coming to a long valley, between two of the ſand hills on the point, a place through which the bears generally paſſed in going towards the water, the hunters whom I accompanied at once told how many bears had come down from the upper country the preceding night, and alſo how many of them were cubs. To the eye of a common obſerver the track of theſe animals amongſt the leaves is wholly imperceptible; indeed,

indeed, in many inſtances, even after the hunters had pointed them out to me, I could but barely perceive the prints of their feet on the cloſeſt inſpection; yet the hunters, on coming up to the place, ſaw theſe marks with a glance of the eye.

After killing a bear, the firſt care of the hunters is to ſtrip him of his ſkin. This buſineſs is performed by them in a very few minutes, as they always carry knives about them particularly ſuited for the purpoſe; afterwards the carcaſe is cut up, an operation in which the tomahawk, an inſtrument that they, moſtly, carry with them alſo, is particularly uſeful. The choiceſt parts of the animal are then ſelected and carried home, and the reſt left in the woods. The Indians hold the paws of the bear in great eſtimation; ſtewed with young puppies, they are ſerved up at all their principal feaſts. On killing the animal, the paws are gaſhed with a knife, and, afterwards, hung over a fire, amidſt the ſmoke, to dry. The ſkins of the bears are applied to numberleſs uſes, in the country, by the farmers, who ſet no ſmall value upon them. They are commonly cured by being ſpread upon a wall or between two trees, before the ſun, and in that poſition ſcraped with a knife, or piece of iron, daily, which brings out the greaſe or oil, a very conſiderable quantity of which

which oozes from them. Racoon and deer ſkins, &c. are cured in a ſimilar manner. The Indians have a method of dreſſing theſe different ſkins with the hair on, and of rendering them at the ſame time as pliable as a piece of cloth; this is principally effected by rubbing the ſkins, with the hand, in the ſmoke of a wood fire.

Towards the middle of the day, the hunt being over, the party returned to the habitation on the point. On arriving there I found my companions, who had juſt come on ſhore, and after having ſtrolled about the woods for a time, we all went on board the ſhip to dine.

The ſky had been very gloomy the whole of this day; it became more and more ſo as the evening approached, and the ſeamen foretold that before morning there would be a dreadful ſtorm. At no time a friend to the watery element, I immediately formed the reſolution of paſſing the night on ſhore; accordingly having got the boat manned after dinner, I took with me my ſervant, and landed at the head of the bay on the eaſtern ſide of the point. Here being left to ourſelves, we pitched our tent by moonlight, under the ſhelter of one of the ſteep ſand hills; and having kindled a large fire in the front of it, laid down, and were ſoon lulled to repoſe

poſe by the hollow roar of the wind amidſt the tall trees of the ſurrounding foreſt. Not ſo my companions, who viſited me at an early hour the next morning, and lamented ſorely that they had not accompanied me on ſhore. There had been a tremendous ſea running in the lake all night; the wind had ſhifted ſomewhat to the ſouthward, and Point Abineau, in conſequence, affording but little protection to the veſſel, ſhe had rolled about in a moſt alarming manner: one of the ſtancheons at her bow ſtarted by her violent working; the water came pouring in as from a pump; a ſcene of confuſion enſued, and the ſailors were kept buſily employed the greater part of the night in ſtopping the leak. The veſſel being old, crazy, and on her laſt voyage, ſerious apprehenſions were entertained leſt ſome worſe accident ſhould befal her before morning, and neither the crew nor the paſſengers felt themſelves at all eaſy until daylight appeared, when the gale abated. We amuſed ourſelves this morning in rambling through the woods, and along the ſhores of the lake, with our fowling pieces. On the ſtrand we found great numbers of gulls, and different birds of prey, ſuch as hawks, kites, &c.; here alſo we met with large flocks of ſand larks, as they are called by the people of the country, in colour ſomewhat reſembling the

the grey lapwing; their walk and manner alſo are ſo very ſimilar, that, when on the ground, they might be taken for the ſame bird were they but of a larger ſize; they are not much bigger than a ſparrow. In the woods we fell in for the firſt time with a large covey or flock of ſpruce partridges or pheaſants, as the people call them in this neighbourhood. In colour, they are not much unlike the Engliſh partridge, but of a larger ſize, and their fleſh differs in flavour little from that of the Engliſh pheaſant. They are different in many reſpects both from the partridge and pheaſant found in Maryland and in the middle ſtates, but in none more ſo than in their wonderful tameneſs, or rather ſtupidity. Before the flock took to flight I ſhot three birds ſingly from off one tree, and had I but been acquainted with the proper method of proceeding at the time, it is poſſible I might have ſhot them all in turn. It ſeems you muſt always begin by ſhooting the bird that ſits loweſt on the tree, and ſo proceed upwards, in which caſe the ſurvivors are not at all alarmed. Ignorant, however, of this ſecret, I ſhot at one of the uppermoſt birds, and the diſturbance that he made in falling through the branches on which the others were perched put the flock to flight immediately.

On

On returning from our ramble in the woods to the margin of the lake, we were agreeably ſurpriſed to find the wind quite favourable for proſecuting our voyage, and in a few minutes afterwards heard the ſignal gun, and ſaw the ſhip's boat coming for the purpoſe of taking us from ſhore. We got on board in time for dinner, but did not proceed on our voyage until midnight; ſo high a ſea ſtill continued running in the lake, that the captain thought it imprudent to venture out of the bay before that time. In the morning we found ourſelves under the rich bold lands on the ſouthern ſide of the lake; the water was ſmooth, the ſky ſerene, and every one felt pleaſed with the voyage. It was on this day that we beheld the cloud over the Falls of Niagara, as I before mentioned, at the great diſtance of fifty-four miles.

Lake Erie is of an elliptical form; in length about three hundred miles, and in breadth, at the wideſt part, about ninety. The depth of water in this lake is not more than twenty fathoms, and in calm weather veſſels may ſecurely ride at anchor in any part of it; but when ſtormy, the anchorage in an open part of the lake is not ſafe, the ſands at bottom not being firm, and the anchors apt therefore to loſe their hold. Whenever there is a gale of wind the waters immediately become turbid, owing

owing to the quantity of yellow ſand that is waſhed up from the bottom of the lake; in calm weather the water is clear, and of a deep greeniſh colour. The northern ſhore of the lake is very rocky, as likewiſe are the ſhores of the iſlands, of which there are ſeveral cluſters towards the weſtern extremity of the lake; but along moſt parts of the ſouthern ſhore is a fine gravelly beach. The height of the land bordering on the lake is very unequal; in ſome places long ranges of ſteep mountains riſe from the very edge of the water; in others the ſhores are ſo flat and ſo low, that when the lake is raiſed a little above its uſual level, in conſequence of a ſtrong gale of wind ſetting in towards the ſhore, the country is deluged for miles.

A young gentleman, who was ſent in a bateau with diſpatches acroſs the lake, not long before we paſſed through the country, periſhed, with ſeveral of his party, owing to an inundation of this ſort that took place on a low part of the ſhore. I muſt here obſerve, that when you navigate the lake in a bateau, it is cuſtomary to keep as cloſe as poſſible to the land; and whenever there is any danger of a ſtorm, you run the veſſel on ſhore, which may be done with ſafety, as the bottom of it is perfectly flat. I before mentioned the peculiar advantage of a bateau over a keel boat in this reſpect. The young gentleman alluded

to

to was coaſting along in this manner, when a violent ſtorm ſuddenly aroſe. The bateau was inſtantaneouſly turned towards the ſhore; unfortunately, however, in running her upon the beach ſome miſmanagement took place, and ſhe overſet. The waves had already begun to break in on the ſhore with prodigious impetuoſity; each one of them rolled farther in than the preceding one; the party took alarm, and inſtead of making as ſtrenuous exertions as it was ſuppoſed they might have made, to right the bateau, they took a few neceſſaries out of her, and attempted to ſave themſelves by flight; but ſo rapidly did the water flow after them, in conſequence of the increaſing ſtorm, that before they could proceed far enough up the country to gain a place of ſafety, they were all overwhelmed by it, two alone excepted, who had the preſence of mind and ability to climb a lofty tree. To the very great irregularity of the height of the lands on both ſides of it, is attributed the frequency of ſtorms on Lake Erie. The ſhores of Lake Ontario are lower and more uniform than thoſe of any of the other lakes; and that lake is the moſt tranquil of any, as has already been noticed.

There is a great deficiency of good harbours along the ſhores of this Lake. On its northern ſide there are but two places which afford ſhelter to veſſels drawing more than

ſeven

ſeven feet water, namely, Long Point and Point Abineau; and theſe only afford a partial ſhelter. If the wind ſhould ſhift to the ſouthward whilſt veſſels happen to be lying under them, they are thereby expoſed to all the dangers of a rocky lee ſhore. On the ſouthern ſhore, the firſt harbour you come to in going from Fort Erie, is that of Preſqu' Iſle. Veſſels drawing eight feet water may there ride in perfect ſafety; but it is a matter of no ſmall difficulty to get into the harbour, owing to a long ſand bar which extends acroſs the mouth of it. Preſqu' Iſle is ſituated at the diſtance of about ſixty miles from Fort Erie. Beyond this, nearly midway between the eaſtern and weſtern extremities of the lake, there is another harbour, capable of containing ſmall veſſels, at the mouth of Cayahega River, and another at the mouth of Sanduſky River, which falls into the lake within the north weſtern territory of the States. It is very ſeldom that any of theſe harbours are made uſe of by the Britiſh ſhips; they, indeed, trade almoſt ſolely between Fort Erie and Detroit River; and when in proſecuting their voyages they chance to meet with contrary winds, againſt which they cannot make head, they for the moſt part return to Fort Erie, if bound to Detroit River; or to ſome of the bays amidſt the cluſters of iſlands ſituated towards the weſtern extremity of the lake

lake, if bound to Fort Erie. In going up the lake, it very often happens that veſſels, even after they have got cloſe under theſe iſlands, the neareſt of which is not leſs than two hundred and forty miles from Fort Erie, are driven back by ſtorms the whole way to that fort. Juſt as we were preparing to caſt anchor under Middle Iſland, one of the neareſt of them, a ſquall ſuddenly aroſe, and it was not without very great difficulty that we could keep our ſtation: the captain told us afterwards, that he really feared at one time, that we ſhould have been driven back to our old quarters.

It was about two o'clock on the third day from that of our quitting Point Abineau, that we reached Middle Iſland. We lay at anchor until the next morning, when the wind ſhifted a few points in our favour, and enabled us to proceed ſome miles farther on, to a place of greater ſafety, ſheltered by iſlands on all ſides; but beyond this the wind did not permit us to advance for three days. It is very ſeldom that veſſels bound from Fort Erie to any place on Detroit River accompliſh their voyage without ſtopping amongſt theſe iſlands; for the ſame wind favourable for carrying them from the eaſtern to the weſtern extremity of the lake will not waft them up the river. The river runs nearly in a ſouth-weſt direction; its current is very ſtrong; and unleſs the wind blows

freſh, and nearly in an oppoſite direction to it, you cannot proceed. The navigation of Lake Erie, in general, is very uncertain; and paſſengers that croſs it in any of the King's, or principal merchant veſſels, are not only called upon to pay double the ſum for their paſſage, demanded for that acroſs Lake Ontario, but anchorage money beſides, that is, a certain ſum per diem as long as the veſſel remains wind bound at anchor in any harbour. The anchorage money is about three dollars per day for each cabin paſſenger.

The iſlands at the weſtern end of the lake, which are of various ſizes, lie very cloſe to each other, and the ſcenery amongſt them is very pleaſing. The largeſt of them are not more than fourteen miles in circumference, and many would ſcarcely be found to admeaſure as many yards round. They are all covered with wood of ſome kind or other, even to the very ſmalleſt. The larger iſlands produce a variety of fine timber, amongſt which are found oaks, hiccory trees, and red cedars; the latter grow to a much larger ſize than in any part of the neighbouring country, and they are ſent for even from the Britiſh ſettlements on Detroit River, forty miles diſtant. None of theſe iſlands are much elevated above the lake, nor are they diverſified with any riſing grounds; moſt of them, indeed, are as flat as if they had been

been overflowed with water, and in the interior parts of ſome of the largeſt of them there are extenſive ponds and marſhes. The fine timber, which theſe iſlands produce, indicates that the ſoil muſt be uncommonly fertile. Here are found in great numbers, amongſt the woods, racoons, and ſquirrels; bears are alſo at times found upon ſome of the iſlands during the winter ſeaſon, when the lake is frozen between the main land and the iſlands; but they do not remain continually, as the other animals do. All the iſlands are dreadfully infeſted with ſerpents, and on ſome of them rattleſnakes are ſo numerous, that in the height of ſummer it is really dangerous to land: it was now late in September; yet we had not been three minutes on ſhore on Baſs Iſland, before ſeveral of theſe noxious reptiles were ſeen amongſt the buſhes, and a couple of them, of a large ſize, were killed by the ſeamen.

Two kinds of rattleſnakes are found in this part of the country; the one is of a deep brown colour, clouded with yellow, and is ſeldom met with more than thirty inches in length. It uſually frequents marſhes and low meadows, where it does great miſchief amongſt cattle, which it bites moſtly in the lips as they are grazing. The other ſort is of a greeniſh yellow colour, clouded with brown, and attains nearly twice the ſize of the other. It is moſt com-

monly found between three and four feet in length, and as thick as the wriſt of a large man. The rattleſnake is much thicker in proportion to its length than any other ſnake, and it is thickeſt in the middle of the body, which approaches ſomewhat to a triangular form, the belly being flat, and the back bone riſing higher than any other part of the animal. The rattle, with which this ſerpent is provided, is at the end of the tail; it is uſually about half an inch in breadth, one quarter of an inch in thickneſs, and each joint about half an inch long. The joint conſiſts of a number of little caſes of a dry horny ſubſtance, incloſed one within another, and not only the outermoſt of theſe little caſes articulates with the outermoſt caſe of the contiguous joint, but each caſe, even to the ſmalleſt one of all, at the inſide, is connected by a ſort of joint with the correſponding caſe in the next joint of the rattle. The little caſes or ſhells lie very looſely within one another, and the noiſe proceeds from their dry and hard coats ſtriking one againſt the other. It is ſaid that the animal gains a freſh joint to its rattle every year; of this, however, I have great doubts, for the largeſt ſnakes are frequently found to have the feweſt joints to their rattles. A medical gentleman in the neighbourhood of Newmarket, behind the Blue Mountains, in Virginia, had a rattle in his poſſeſſion,

poſſeſſion, which contained no leſs than thirty-two joints; yet the ſnake from which it was taken ſcarcely admeaſured five feet; rattle-ſnakes, however, of the ſame kind, and in the ſame part of the country, have been found of a greater length with not more than ten rattles. One of the ſnakes, which we ſaw killed on Baſs Iſland, in Lake Erie, had no more than four joints in its rattle, and yet it was nearly four feet long.

The ſkin of the rattleſnake, when the animal is wounded, or otherwiſe enraged, exhibits a variety of beautiful tints, never ſeen at any other time. It is not with the teeth which the rattleſnake uſes for ordinary purpoſes that it ſtrikes its enemy, but with two long crooked fangs in the upper jaw, which point down the throat. When about to uſe theſe fangs, it rears itſelf up as much as poſſible, throws back its head, drops its under jaw, and ſpringing forward upon its tail, endeavours to hook itſelf as it were upon its enemy. In order to raiſe itſelf on its tail it coils itſelf up previouſly in a ſpiral line, with the head in the middle. It cannot ſpring farther forward than about half its own length.

The fleſh of the rattleſnake is as white as the moſt delicate fiſh, and is much eſteemed by thoſe who are not prevented from taſting it by prejudice. The ſoup made from it is ſaid to be delicious, and very nouriſhing.

In my rambles about the iſlands under which we lay at anchor, I found many ſpecimens of the exuviæ of theſe ſnakes, which, in the opinion of the country people of Upper Canada, are very efficacious in the cure of the rheumatiſm, when laid over the part afflicted, and faſtened down with a bandage. The body of the rattleſnake dried to a cinder over the fire, and then finely pulveriſed, and infuſed in a certain portion of brandy, is alſo ſaid to be a never failing remedy againſt that diſorder. I converſed with many people who had made uſe of this medicine, and they were firmly perſuaded that they were indebted to it for a ſpeedy cure. The liquor is taken inwardly, in the quantity of a wine glaſs full at once, about three times a day. No effect, more than from taking plain brandy, is perceived from taking this medicine on the firſt day; but at the end of the ſecond day the body of the patient becomes ſuffuſed with a cold ſweat, every one of his joints grow painful, and his limbs become feeble, and ſcarcely able to ſupport him; he grows worſe and worſe for a day or two; but perſevering in the uſe of the medicine for a few days, he gradually loſes his pains, and recovers his wonted ſtrength of body.

Many different kinds of ſerpents beſides rattleſnakes are found on theſe iſlands in Lake Erie. I killed ſeveral totally different from any

any that I had ever met with in any other part of the country; amongſt the number was one which I was informed was venomous in the higheſt degree: it was ſomewhat more than three feet in length; its back was perfectly black; its belly a vivid orange. I found it amongſt the rocks on Middle Iſland, and on being wounded in the tail, it turned about to defend itſelf with inconceivable fury. Mr. Carver tells of a ſerpent that is peculiar to theſe iſlands, called the hiſſing ſnake: "It is," ſays he, "of the ſmall ſpeckled kind, and about "eighteen inches long. When any thing ap- "proaches it, it flattens itſelf in a moment, "and its ſpots, which are of various dyes, "become viſibly brighter through rage; at the "ſame time it blows from its mouth with "great force a ſubtile wind that is reported to "be of a nauſeous ſmell, and if drawn in with "the breath of the unwary traveller will in- "fallibly bring on a decline, that in a few "months muſt prove mortal, there being no "remedy yet diſcovered which can counteract "its baneful influence." Mr. Carver does not inform us of his having himſelf ſeen this ſnake; I am tempted, therefore, to imagine, that he has been impoſed upon, and that the whole account he has given of it is fabulous. I made very particular enquiries reſpecting the exiſtence of ſuch a ſnake, from thoſe perſons who

were in the habit of touching at these islands, and neither they nor any other person I met with in the country had ever seen or heard of such a snake, except in Mr. Carver's Travels. Were a traveller to believe all the stories respecting snakes that are current in the country, he must believe that there is such a snake as the whip snake, which, as it is said, pursues cattle through the woods and meadows, lashing them with its tail, till overcome with the fatigue of running they drop breathless to the ground, when it preys upon their flesh; he must also believe that there is such a snake as the hoop snake, which has the power of fixing its tail firmly in a certain cavity inside of its mouth, and then of rolling itself forward like a hoop or wheel with such wonderful velocity that neither man nor beast can possibly escape from its devouring jaws.

The ponds and marshes in the interior parts of these islands abound with ducks and other wild fowl, and the shores swarm with gulls. A few small birds are found in the woods; but I saw none amongst them that were remarkable either for their song or plumage.

At sun-set, on the last day of September, we left the islands, and the next morning entered Detroit River. The river, at its mouth, is about five miles wide, and continues nearly the same breadth for a considerable distance. The shores

ſhores are of a moderate height, and thickly wooded; but there was nothing particularly intereſting in the proſpect till we arrived within four or five miles of the new Britiſh poſt. Here the banks appeared diverſified with Indian encampments and villages, and beyond them the Britiſh ſettlements were ſeen to great advantage. The river was crowded with Indian canoes and bateaux, and ſeveral pleaſure boats belonging to the officers of the garriſon, and to the traders, that had come out in expectation of meeting us, were ſeen cruizing about backwards and forwards. The two other veſſels of war, which we had left behind us at Fort Erie, as well as the trading veſſels, had overtaken us juſt as we entered the river, and we all ſailed up together with every bit of canvaſs, that we could muſter, full ſpread. The day was uncommonly clear, and the ſcene altogether was pleaſing and intereſting.

The other veſſels proceeded up the river to the Britiſh poſt; but ours, which was laden with preſents for the Indians, caſt anchor oppoſite to the habitation of the gentleman in the Indian department, whom I before mentioned, which was ſituated in the diſtrict of Malden. He gave us a moſt cordial invitation to ſtay at his houſe whilſt we ſhould remain in this part of the country; we gladly accepted of it, and accordingly went with him on ſhore.

LETTER XXXIII.

Description of the District of Malden.—Establishment of a new British Post there.—Island of Bois Blanc.—Difference between the British and Americans respecting the Right of Possession.—Block Houses, how constructed.—Captain E—'s Farm.—Indians.—Description of Detroit River, and the Country bordering upon it.—Town of Detroit.—Head Quarters of the American Army.—Officers of the Western Army.—Unsuccessful Attempt of the Americans to impress upon the Minds of the Indians an Idea of their Consequence.—Of the Country round Detroit.—Doubts concerning our Route back to Philadelphia.—Determine to go by Presqu' Isle.—Departure from Detroit.

Malden, October.

MALDEN is a district of considerable extent, situated on the eastern side of Detroit River, about eighteen miles below the town of Detroit. At the lower end of the district there are but few houses, and these stand very widely asunder; but at the upper end, bordering upon the river, and adjoining to the new British post that has been established since the evacuation of Detroit, a little town

town has been laid out, which already contains more than twenty houſes, and is rapidly increaſing. Hither ſeveral of the traders have removed who formerly reſided at Detroit. This little town has as yet received no particular name, neither has the new poſt, but they merely go under the name of the new Britiſh poſt and town near the iſland of Bois-Blanc, an iſland in the river near two miles in length, and half a mile in breadth, that lies oppoſite to Malden.

When the evacuation of Detroit was firſt talked of, the iſland was looked to as an eligible ſituation for the new poſt, and orders were ſent to purchaſe it from the Indians, and to take poſſeſſion of it in the name of his Britannic Majeſty. Accordingly a party of troops went down for that purpoſe from Detroit; they erected a ſmall block houſe on the northern extremity of it, and left a ſerjeant's guard there for its defence. Preparations were afterwards making for building a fort on it; but in the mean time a warm remonſtrance againſt ſuch proceedings came from the government of the United States *, who inſiſted

* Notwithſtanding that the government of the United States has thought it incumbent upon itſelf to remonſtrate againſt our taking poſſeſſion of this iſland, and thus to diſpute every inch of ground reſpecting the right to which there could not be the ſmalleſt doubt, yet the generality of the people of the States

inſiſted upon it that the iſland was not within the limits of the Britiſh dominions. The point,

States affect to talk of every ſuch ſtep as idle and unneceſſary, inaſmuch as they are fully perſuaded, in their own minds, that all the Britiſh dominions in North America muſt, ſooner or later, become a part of their empire. Thus Mr. Imlay, in his account of the north weſtern territory: "It is certain, that as "the country has been more opened in America, and thereby "the rays of the ſun have acted more powerfully upon the "earth, theſe benefits have tended greatly to ſoften the winter "ſeaſon; ſo that peopling Canada, for which we are much "obliged to you, is a double advantage to us. Firſt, it is ſet-"tling and populating a country that muſt, ſooner or later, "from the natural order of things, become a part of our em-"pire; and ſecondly, it is immediately meliorating the cli-"mate of the northern ſtates," &c.

The greateſt empires that have ever appeared on the face of the globe have diſſolved in the courſe of time, and no one acquainted with hiſtory will, I take it for granted, preſume to ſay that the extended empire of Britain, all powerful as it is at preſent, is ſo much more cloſely knit together than any other empire ever was before it, that it can never fall aſunder; Canada, I therefore ſuppoſe, may, with revolving years, be diſjointed from the mother country, as well as her other colonies; but whenever that period ſhall arrive, which I truſt is far diſtant, I am humbly of opinion that it will not form an additional knot in that extenſive union of ſtates which at preſent ſubſiſt on the continent of North America; indeed, were the Britiſh dominions in North America to be diſſevered from the other members of the empire the enſuing year, I am ſtill tempted to imagine that they would not become linked with the preſent federal American ſtates, and for the following reaſons:

Firſt, becauſe the conſtitution of the federal ſtates, which is the bond that holds them together, is not calculated for ſuch a large territory as that which the preſent ſtates, together with ſuch an addition, would conſtitute.

The conſtitution of the ſtates is that of the people, who, through their reſpective repreſentatives aſſembled together at ſome

point, it was found, would admit of ſome diſpute, and as it could not be determined immediately,

ſome one place, muſt decide upon every meaſure that is to be taken for the public weal. This place, it is evident, ought in juſtice to be as central as poſſible to every ſtate; the neceſſity, indeed, of having the place ſo ſituated has been manifeſted in the building of the new federal city. Were it not for this ſtep, many of the moſt enlightened characters in the ſtates have given it as their opinion, that the union could not have remained many years entire, for the ſtates ſo far removed from the ſeat of the legiſlature, before the new city was founded, had complained grievouſly of the diſtance which their delegates had to travel to meet congreſs, and had begun to talk of the neceſſity of a ſeparation of the ſtates: and now, on the other hand, that a central ſpot has been fixed upon, thoſe ſtates to the northward, conveniently ſituated to Philadelphia, the preſent ſeat of the federal government, ſay that the new city will be ſo far removed from them, that the ſending of delegates thither will be highly inconvenient to them, and ſo much ſo, as to call for a ſeparation of the union on their part. In a former letter I ſtated the various opinions that were entertained by the people of the United States on this ſubject, and I endeavoured to ſhew that the ſeat of congreſs would be removed to the new federal city without endangering a partition of the ſtates; but I am fully perſuaded, that were Canada to become an independent ſtate, and a place were to be fixed on central to all the ſtates, ſuppoſing her to be one, that neither ſhe, nor the ſtate at the remote oppoſite end, would long continue, if they ever did ſubmit, to ſend their delegates to a place ſo far removed, that it would require more than a fourth part of the year for them (the delegates) to travel, even with the utmoſt poſſible expedition, backward and forward, between the diſtrict which they repreſented and the ſeat of congreſs.

Secondly, I think the two Canadas will never become connected with the preſent ſtates, becauſe the people of theſe provinces, and thoſe of the adjoining ſtates, are not formed for a cloſe intimacy with each other.

The bulk of the people of Upper Canada are refugees, who were

diately, the plan of building the fort was relinquiſhed for the time. The block houſe on the

were driven from the ſtates by the perſecution of the republican party; and though the thirteen years which have paſſed over have nearly extinguiſhed every ſpark of reſentment againſt the Americans in the breaſts of the people of England, yet this is by no means the caſe in Upper Canada; it is there common to hear, even from the children of the refugees, the moſt groſs invectives poured out againſt the people of the ſtates; and the people of the frontier ſtates, in their turn, are as violent againſt the refugees and their poſterity; and, indeed, whilſt Canada forms a part of the Britiſh empire, I am inclined, from what I have ſeen and heard in travelling through the country, to think that this ſpirit will not die away. In Lower Canada the ſame acrimonious temper of mind is not obſervable amongſt the people, excepting indeed in thoſe few parts of the country where the inhabited parts of the ſtates approach cloſely to thoſe of the province; but here appears to be a general diſinclination amongſt the inhabitants to have any political connection with the people of the ſtates, and the French Canadians affect to hold them in the greateſt contempt. Added to this, the prevalent language of the lower province, which has remained the ſame for almoſt forty years, notwithſtanding the great pains that have been taken to change it, and which is therefore likely to remain ſo ſtill, is another obſtacle in the way of any cloſe connection between the people of the lower province and thoſe of the ſtates. Even in conducting the affairs of the provincial legiſlative aſſembly, notwithſtanding that moſt of the Engliſh inhabitants are well acquainted with the French language, yet a conſiderable degree of difficulty is experienced from the generality of the French delegates being totally ignorant of the Engliſh language, which, as I have already mentioned, they have an unconquerable averſion againſt learning.

Thirdly, I think the Britiſh dominions in North America will never be annexed to thoſe of the ſtates, becauſe they are by nature formed for conſtituting a ſeparate independent territory.

At

the iſland, however, ſtill remains guarded, and poſſeſſion will be kept of it until the matter in diſpute

At preſent the boundary line between the Britiſh dominions and the States runs along the river St. Croix, thence along the high lands bordering upon New England till it meets the forty-fifth parallel of north latitude, and afterwards along the ſaid parallel until it ſtrikes the River St. Lawrence, or Cataragui, or Iroquois. Now the dominions ſouth of the St. Lawrence are evidently not ſeparated from the United States by any bold determinate boundary line; I therefore ſuppoſe that they may, in ſome manner, be connected with them; but the country to the northward, bounded on the north by Hudſon's Bay, on the eaſt by the ocean, on the ſouth and weſt by the St. Lawrence, and that vaſt chain of lakes which extends to the weſtward, is ſeparated from the United States by one of the moſt remarkable boundary lines that is to be found on the face of the globe between any two countries on the ſame continent; and from being bounded in ſuch a remarkable manner, and thus detached as it were by nature from the other parts of the continent, it appears to me that it is calculated for forming a diſtinct ſeparate ſtate, or diſtinct union of ſtates, from the preſent American federal ſtates; that is, ſuppoſing, with the revolutions of time, that this arm of the Britiſh empire ſhould be ſome time or other lopped off. I confeſs it appears ſtrange to me, that any perſon ſhould ſuppoſe, after-looking attentively over a map of North America, that the Britiſh dominions, ſo extenſive and ſo unconnected with them, could ever become joined in a political union with the preſent federal ſtates on the continent. There is more reaſon to imagine that the Floridas, and the Spaniſh poſſeſſions to the eaſt of the Miſſiſſippi, will be united therewith; for as the rivers which flow through the Spaniſh dominions are the only channels whereby the people of ſome of the weſtern ſtates can convey the produce of their own country to the ocean with convenience, it is natural to ſuppoſe that the people of theſe ſtates will be anxious to gain poſſeſſion of theſe rivers, for which purpoſe they muſt poſſeſs themſelves of the country through which they paſs. But there are certain bounds, beyond

diſpute be adjudged by the commiſſioners appointed, purſuant to the late treaty, for the purpoſe of determining the exact boundaries of the Britiſh dominions in this part of the continent, which were by no means clearly aſcertained by the definitive treaty of peace between the States and Great Britain.

In this particular inſtance the diſpute ariſes reſpecting the true meaning of certain words of the treaty. "The boundary line," it ſays, "is to run through the middle of Lake Erie "until it arrive at the water communication "between that lake and Lake Huron; thence "along the middle of the ſaid water commu-"nication." The people of the States conſtrue the middle of the water communication to be the middle of the moſt approved and moſt frequented channel of the river; we, on the contrary, conſtrue it to be the middle of the river, provided there is a tolerable channel on each ſide. Now the iſland of Bois Blanc clearly lies between the middle of the river and the Britiſh main; but then the deepeſt and moſt approved channel for ſhips of burthen is between the iſland and the Britiſh ſhore. In

yond which a repreſentative government cannot extend, and the ocean on the eaſt and ſouth, the St. Lawrence and the lakes on the north, and the Miſſiſſippi on the weſt, certainly appear to ſet bounds to the juriſdiction of the government of the United States, if indeed it can extend even ſo far.

our acceptation of the word, therefore, the iſland unqueſtionably belongs to us; in that of the people of the States, to them. It appears to me, that our claim in this inſtance is certainly the moſt juſt; for although the beſt and moſt commodious channel be on our ſide, yet the channel on the oppoſite ſide of the iſland is ſufficiently deep to admit through it, with perfect ſafety, the largeſt of the veſſels at preſent on the lakes, and indeed as large veſſels as are deemed ſuitable for this navigation.

Plans for a fort on the main land, and for one on the iſland of Bois Blanc, have been drawn; but as only the one fort will be erected, the building of it is poſtponed until it is determined to whom the iſland belongs: if within the Britiſh dominions, the fort will be erected on the iſland, as there is a ſtill more advantageous poſition for one there than on the main land; in the mean time a large block houſe, capable of accommodating, in every reſpect comfortably, one hundred men and officers, has been erected on the main land, around which about four acres or more of ground have been reſerved for his Majeſty's uſe, in caſe the fort ſhould not be built on the iſland.

A block houſe, which I have ſo frequently mentioned, is a building, whoſe walls are

formed of thick ſquare pieces of timber. It is uſually built two ſtories high, in which caſe the upper ſtory is made to project about two or three feet beyond the walls of the lower one, and loop holes are left in the floor round the edge of it, ſo that if an attempt were made to ſtorm the houſe, the garriſon could fire directly down upon the heads of the aſſailants. Loop holes are left alſo in various parts of the walls, ſome of which are formed, as is the caſe at this new block houſe at Malden, of a ſize ſufficient to admit a ſmall cannon to be fired through them. The loop holes are furniſhed with large wooden ſtoppers or wedges, which in the winter ſeaſon, when there is no danger of an attack, are put in, and the interſtices cloſely caulked, to guard againſt the cold; and indeed, to render the houſe warm, they are obliged to take no ſmall pains in cauiking the ſeams between the timber in every part. A block houſe, built on the moſt approved plan, is ſo conſtructed, that if one half of it were ſhot away, the other half would ſtand firm. Each piece of timber in the roof and walls is jointed in ſuch a manner as to be rendered independent of the next piece to it; one wall is independent of the next wall, and the roof is in a great meaſure independent of all of them, ſo that if a piece of artillery were played upon the houſe, that

that bit of timber alone againſt which the ball ſtruck would be diſplaced, and every other one would remain uninjured. A block houſe is proof againſt the heavieſt fire of muſquetry. As theſe houſes may be erected in a very ſhort time, and as there is ſuch an abundance of timber in every part of the country, wherewith to build them, they are met with in North America at almoſt every military out-poſt, and indeed in almoſt every fortreſs throughout the country. There are ſeveral in the upper town of Quebec.

Amongſt the ſcattered houſes at the lower end of the diſtrict of Malden, there are ſeveral of a reſpectable appearance, and the farms adjoining to them are very conſiderable. The farm belonging to our friend, Captain E——, under whoſe roof we tarry, contains no leſs than two thouſand acres. A very large part of it is cleared, and it is cultivated in a ſtyle which would not be thought meanly of even in England. His houſe, which is the beſt in the whole diſtrict, is agreeably ſituated, at the diſtance of about two hundred yards from the river; there is a full view of the river, and of the iſland of Bois Blanc, from the parlour windows, and the ſcene is continually enlivened by the number of Indian canoes that paſs and repaſs before it. In front of the houſe there is a neat little lawn, paled in,

and ornamented with clumps of trees, at the bottom of which, not far from the water, ſtands a large Indian wigwam, called the council houſe, in which the Indians are aſſembled whenever there are any affairs of importance to be tranſacted between them and the officers in the Indian department. Great numbers of theſe people come from the iſland of Bois Blanc, where no leſs than five hundred families of them are encamped, to viſit us daily; and we in our turn go frequently to the iſland, to have an opportunity of obſerving their native manners and cuſtoms.

Our friend has told them, that we have croſſed the big lake, the Atlantic, on purpoſe to come and ſee them. This circumſtance has given them a very favourable opinion of us; they approve highly of the undertaking, and ſay that we have employed our time to a good purpoſe. No people on earth have a higher opinion of their own conſequence; indeed, they eſteem themſelves ſuperior to every other race of men.

We remained for a ſhort time in Malden, and then ſet off for Detroit in a neat little pleaſure boat, which one of the traders obligingly lent to us. The river between the two places varies in breadth from two miles to half a mile. The banks are moſtly very low, and in ſome places large marſhes extend along the ſhores,

ſhores, and far up into the country. The ſhores are adorned with rich timber of various kinds, and bordering upon the marſhes, where the trees have full ſcope to extend their branches, the woodland ſcenery is very fine. Amidſt the marſhes, the river takes ſome very conſiderable bends, and it is diverſified at the ſame time with ſeveral large iſlands, which occaſion a great diverſity of proſpect.

Beyond Malden no houſes are to be ſeen on either ſide of the river, except indeed the few miſerable little huts in the Indian villages, until you come within four miles or thereabouts of Detroit. Here the ſettlements are very numerous on both ſides, but particularly on that belonging to the Britiſh. The country abounds with peach, apple, and cherry orchards, the richeſt I ever beheld; in many of them the trees, loaded with large apples of various dyes, appeared bent down into the very water. They have many different ſorts of excellent apples in this part of the country, but there is one far ſuperior to all the reſt, and which is held in great eſtimation, called the pomme caille. I do not recollect to have ſeen it in any other part of the world, though doubtleſs it is not peculiar to this neighbourhood. It is of an extraordinary large ſize, and deep red colour; not confined merely to the ſkin, but extending to the very core of the apple: if the

ſkin be taken off delicately, the fruit appears nearly as red as when entire. We could not reſiſt the temptation of ſtopping at the firſt of theſe orchards we came to, and for a few pence we were allowed to lade our boat with as much fruit as we could well carry away. The peaches were nearly out of ſeaſon now, but from the few I taſted, I ſhould ſuppoſe that they were of a good kind, far ſuperior in flavour, ſize, and juicineſs to thoſe commonly met with in the orchards of the middle ſtates.

The houſes in this part of the country are all built in a ſimilar ſtyle to thoſe in Lower Canada; the lands are laid out and cultivated alſo ſimilarly to thoſe in the lower province; the manners and perſons of the inhabitants are the ſame; French is the predominant language, and the traveller may fancy for a moment, if he pleaſes, that he has been wafted by enchantment back again into the neighbourhood of Montreal or Three Rivers. All the principal poſts throughout the weſtern country, along the lakes, the Ohio, the Illinois, &c. were eſtabliſhed by the French; but, except at Detroit and in the neighbourhood, and in the Illinois country, the French ſettlers have become ſo blended with the greater number who ſpoke Engliſh, that their language has every where died away.

Detroit

Detroit contains about three hundred houſes, and is the largeſt town in the weſtern country. It ſtands contiguous to the river, on the top of the banks, which are here about twenty feet high. At the bottom of them there are very extenſive wharfs for the accommodation of the ſhipping, built of wood, ſimilar to thoſe in the Atlantic ſea-ports. The town conſiſts of ſeveral ſtreets that run parallel to the river, which are interſected by others at right angles. They are all very narrow, and not being paved, dirty in the extreme whenever it happens to rain: for the accommodation of paſſengers, however, there are footways in moſt of them, formed of ſquare logs, laid tranſverſely cloſe to each other. The town is ſurrounded by a ſtrong ſtockade, through which there are four gates; two of them open to the wharfs, and the two others to the north and ſouth ſide of the town reſpectively. The gates are defended by ſtrong block houſes, and on the weſt ſide of the town is a ſmall fort in form of a ſquare, with baſtions at the angles. At each of the corners of this fort is planted a ſmall field-piece; and theſe conſtitute the whole of the ordnance at preſent in the place. The Britiſh kept a conſiderable train of artillery here, but the place was never capable of holding out for any length of time againſt a regular force: the fortifications, indeed, were con-

ſtructed chiefly as a defence againſt the Indians.

Detroit is at preſent the head-quarters of the weſtern army of the States; the garriſon conſiſts of three hundred men, who are quartered in barracks. Very little attention is paid by the officers to the minutiæ of diſcipline, ſo that however well the men may have acquitted themſelves in the field, they make but a poor appearance on parade. The belles of the town are quite au deſeſpoir at the late departure of the Britiſh troops; though the American officers tell them they have no reaſon to be ſo, as they will find them much more ſenſible agreeable men than the Britiſh officers when they know them; a ſtyle of converſation, which, ſtrange as it may appear to us, is yet not at all uncommon amongſt them. Three months, however, have not altered the firſt opinion of the ladies. I cannot better give you an idea of the unpoliſhed, coarſe, diſcordant manners of the generality of the officers of the weſtern army of the States, than by telling you, that they cannot agree ſufficiently amongſt themſelves to form a regimental meſs; repeated attempts have been made ſince their arrival at Detroit to eſtabliſh one, but their frequent quarrels would never ſuffer it to remain permanent. A duelliſt and an officer of the weſtern army were nearly ſynonimous

terms, at one period, in the United States, owing to the very great number of duels that took place amongſt them when cantoned at Grenville.

About two thirds of the inhabitants of Detroit are of French extraction, and the greater part of the inhabitants of the ſettlements on the river, both above and below the town, are of the ſame deſcription. The former are moſtly engaged in trade, and they all appear to be much on an equality. Detroit is a place of very conſiderable trade; there are no leſs than twelve trading veſſels belonging to it, brigs, ſloops, and ſchooners, of from fifty to one hundred tons burthen each. The inland navigation in this quarter is indeed very extenſive, Lake Erie, three hundred miles in length, being open to veſſels belonging to the port, on the one ſide; and lakes Michigan and Huron, the firſt upwards of two hundred miles in length, and ſixty in breadth, and the ſecond, no leſs than one thouſand miles in circumference, on the oppoſite ſide; not to ſpeak of Lake St. Clair and Detroit River, which connect theſe former lakes together, or of the many large rivers which fall into them. The ſtores and ſhops in the town are well furniſhed, and you may buy fine cloth, linen, &c. and every article of wearing apparel, as good in their kind, and nearly on as reaſonable terms,

as

as you can purchaſe them at New York or Philadelphia.

The inhabitants are well ſupplied with proviſions of every deſcription; the fiſh in particular, caught in the river and neighbouring lakes, are of a very ſuperior quality. The fiſh held in moſt eſtimation is a ſort of large trout, called the Michillimakinac white fiſh, from its being caught moſtly in the ſtraits of that name. The inhabitants of Detroit and the neighbouring country, however, though they have proviſions in plenty, are frequently much diſtreſſed for one very neceſſary concomitant, namely, ſalt. Until within a ſhort time paſt they had no ſalt but what was brought from Europe; but ſalt ſprings have been diſcovered in various parts of the country, from which they are now beginning to manufacture that article for themſelves. The beſt and moſt profitable of the ſprings are retained in the hands of government, and the profits ariſing from the ſale of the ſalt are to be paid into the treaſury of the province. Throughout the weſtern country they procure their ſalt from ſprings, ſome of which throw up ſufficient water to yield ſeveral hundred buſhels in the courſe of one week.

There is a large Roman catholic church in the town of Detroit, and another on the oppoſite ſide, called the Huron church, from its having

having been devoted to the uſe of the Huron Indians. The ſtreets of Detroit are generally crowded with Indians of one tribe or other, and amongſt them you ſee numberleſs old ſquaws leading about their daughters, ever ready to diſpoſe of them, pro tempore, to the higheſt bidder. At night all the Indians, except ſuch as get admittance into private houſes, and remain there quietly, are turned out of the town, and the gates ſhut upon them.

The American officers here have endeavoured to their utmoſt to impreſs upon the minds of the Indians an idea of their own ſuperiority over the Britiſh; but as they are very tardy in giving theſe people any preſents, they do not pay much attention to their words. General Wayne, from continually promiſing them preſents, but at the ſame time always poſtponing the delivery when they come to aſk for them, has ſignificantly been nicknamed by them, General Wabang, that is General Tomorrow.

The country around Detroit is very much cleared, and ſo likewiſe is that on the Britiſh ſide of the river for a conſiderable way above the town. The ſettlements extend nearly as far as Lake Huron; but beyond the River La Trenche, which falls into Lake St. Clair, they are ſcattered very thinly along the ſhores. The banks of the River La Trenche, or Thames,

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as it is now called, are increasing very fast in population, as I before mentioned, owing to the great emigration thither of people from the neighbourhood of Niagara, and of Detroit also since it has been evacuated by the British. We made an excursion, one morning, in our little boat as far as Lake St. Clair, but met with nothing, either amongst the inhabitants, or in the face of the country, particularly deserving of mention. The country round Detroit is uncommonly flat, and in none of the rivers is there a fall sufficient to turn even a grist mill. The current of Detroit River itself is stronger than that of any others, and a floating mill was once invented by a Frenchman, which was chained in the middle of that river, where it was thought the stream would be sufficiently swift to turn the water wheel: the building of it was attended with considerable expence to the inhabitants, but after it was finished it by no means answered their expectations. They grind their corn at present by wind mills, which I do not remember to have seen in any other part of North America.

The soil of the country bordering upon Detroit River is rich though light, and it produces good crops both of Indian corn and wheat. The climate is much more healthy than that of the country in the neighbourhood of

of Niagara River; intermittent fevers however are by no means uncommon diſorders. The ſummers are intenſely hot, Fahrenheit's thermometer often riſing above 100; yet a winter ſeldom paſſes over but what ſnow remains on the ground for two or three months.

Whilſt we remained at Detroit, we had to determine upon a point of ſome moment to us travellers, namely, upon the route by which to return back towards the Atlantic. None of us felt much inclined to croſs the lake again to Fort Erie, we at once therefore laid aſide all thoughts of returning that way. Two other routes then preſented themſelves for our conſideration; the one was to proceed by land from Detroit, through the north weſtern territory of the United States, as far as the head waters of ſome one of the rivers which fall into the Ohio, having reached which, we might afterwards have proceeded upwards or downwards, as we found moſt expedient: the other was to croſs by water to Preſqu' Iſle, on the ſouth ſide of Lake Erie, and thence go down French Creek and the Alleghany River, as far as Pittſburgh on the Ohio, where being arrived we ſhould likewiſe have had the choice of deſcending the Ohio and Miſſiſſippi, or of going on to Philadelphia, through Pennſylvania, according as we ſhould find circumſtances moſt convenient. The firſt of theſe

routes

routes was moſt ſuited to our inclination, but we ſoon found that we muſt give over all thoughts of proceeding by it. The way to have proceeded would have been to ſet out on horſeback, taking with us ſufficient proviſions to laſt for a journey through a foreſt of upwards of two hundred miles in length, and truſting our horſes to the food which they could pick up for themſelves amongſt the buſhes. There was no poſſibility of procuring horſes, however, for hire at Detroit or in the neighbourhood, and had we purchaſed them, which could not have been done but at a moſt exorbitant price, we ſhould have found it a difficult matter perhaps to have got rid of them when we had ended our land journey, unleſs indeed we choſe to turn them adrift in the woods, which would not have been perfectly ſuitable to our finances. But independent of this conſideration there was another obſtacle in our way, and that was the difficulty of procuring guides. The Indians were all preparing to ſet out on their hunting excurſions, and had we even been able to have procured a party of them for an eſcort, there would have been ſome riſk, we were told, of their deſerting us before we reached our journey's end. If they fell in on their journey with a hunting party that had been very ſucceſsful; if they came to a place where there was great abund-

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ance of game; or, in ſhort, if we did not proceed juſt according to their fancy, impatient of every reſtraint, and without caring in the leaſt for the hire we had promiſed them, they would, perhaps, leave us in the whim of moment to ſhift for ourſelves in the woods, a ſituation we had no deſire to ſee ourſelves reduced to: we determined therefore to proceed by Preſqu' Iſle. But now another difficulty aroſe, namely, how we were to get there: a ſmall veſſel, a very unuſual circumſtance indeed, was juſt about to ſail, but it was ſo crowded with paſſengers, that there was not a ſingle birth vacant, and moreover, if there had been, we did not wiſh to depart ſo abruptly from this part of the country. One of the principal traders, however, at Detroit, to whom we had carried letters, ſoon accommodated matters to our ſatisfaction, by promiſing to give orders to the maſter of one of the lake veſſels, of which he was in part owner, to land us at that place. The veſſel was to ſail in a fortnight; we immediately therefore ſecured a paſſage in her, and having ſettled with the maſter that he ſhould call for us at Malden, we ſet off once more for that place in our little boat, and in a few hours, from the time we quitted Detroit, arrived there.

LETTER XXXIV.

Preſents delivered to the Indians on the Part of the Britiſh Government.—Mode of diſtributing them.—Reaſons why given.—What is the beſt Method of conciliating the good Will of the Indians.—Little pains taken by the Americans to keep up a good Underſtanding with the Indians.—Conſequences thereof.—War between the Americans and Indians.—A brief Account of it.—Peace concluded by General Wayne.—Not likely to remain permanent.—Why.—Indian Manner of making Peace deſcribed.

Malden, October.

ADJOINING to our friend's houſe at Malden ſtands an extenſive range of ſtore-houſes, for the reception of the preſents yearly made by government to the Indians in this part of the country, in which ſeveral clerks are kept conſtantly employed. Before we had been long at Malden we had an opportunity of ſeeing ſome of the preſents delivered out. A number of chiefs of different tribes had previouſly come to our friend, who is at the head of the department in this quarter, and had given to him, each, a bundle of little bits of cedar wood, about the thickneſs of a ſmall pocket book pencil, to remind him of the exact number

number of individuals in each tribe that expected to ſhare the bounty of their great father. The ſticks in theſe bundles were of different lengths, the longeſt denoted the number of warriors in the tribe, the next in ſize the number of women, and the ſmalleſt the number of children. Our friend on receiving them handed them over to his clerks, who made a memorandum in their books of the contents of each bundle, and of the perſons that gave them, in order to prepare the preſents accordingly. The day fixed upon for the delivery of the preſents was bright and fair, and being in every reſpect favourable for the purpoſe, the clerks began to make the neceſſary arrangements accordingly.

A number of large ſtakes were firſt fixed down in different parts of the lawn, to each of which was attached a label, with the name of the tribe, and the number of perſons in it, who were to be provided for; then were brought out from the ſtores ſeveral bales of thick blankets, of blue, ſcarlet, and brown cloth, and of coarſe figured cottons, together with large rolls of tobacco, guns, flints, powder, balls, ſhot, caſe-knives, ivory and horn combs, looking-glaſſes, pipe-tomahawks, hatchets, ſciſſars, needles, vermilion in bags, copper and iron pots and kettles, the whole valued at about £. 500 ſterling. The bales of goods

being opened, the blankets, cloths, and cottons were cut up into ſmall pieces, each ſufficient to make for one perſon a wrapper, a ſhirt, a pair of leggings, or whatever elſe it was intended for; and the portions of the different articles intended for each tribe were thrown together in a heap, at the bottom of the ſtake which bore its name. This buſineſs took up ſeveral hours, as there were no leſs than four hundred and twenty Indians to be ſerved. No liquor, nor any ſilver ornaments, except to favourite chiefs in private, are ever given on the part of government to the Indians, notwithſtanding they are ſo fond of both; and a trader who attempts to give theſe articles to them in exchange for the preſents they have received from government, or, indeed, who takes from them on any conditions, their preſents, is liable to a very heavy penalty for every ſuch act, by the laws of the province.

The preſents having been all prepared, the chiefs were ordered to aſſemble their warriors, who were loitering about the grounds at the outſide of the lawn. In a few minutes they all came, and having been drawn up in a large circle, our friend delivered a ſpeech on the occaſion, without which ceremony no buſineſs, according to Indian cuſtom, is ever tranſacted. In this they were told, "That their great and good Father, who lived on the oppoſite ſide of

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the big lake (meaning thereby the king) was ever attentive to the happineſs of all his faithful people; and that, with his accuſtomed bounty, he had ſent the preſents which now lay before them to his good children the Indians; that he had ſent the guns, the hatchets, and the ammunition for the young men, and the clothing for the aged, women, and children; that he hoped the young men would have no occaſion to employ their weapons in fighting againſt enemies, but merely in hunting; and that he recommended it to them to be attentive to the old, and to ſhare bountifully with them what they gained by the chace; that he truſted the great ſpirit would give them bright ſuns and clear ſkies, and a favourable ſeaſon for hunting; and that when another year ſhould paſs over, if he ſtill continued to find them good children, he would not fail to renew his bounties, by ſending them more preſents from acroſs the big lake.

This ſpeech was delivered in Engliſh, but interpreters attended, who repeated it to the different tribes in their reſpective languages, paragraph by paragraph, at the end of every one of which the Indians ſignified their ſatisfaction by a loud coarſe exclamation of "Hoah! Hoah!" The ſpeech ended, the chiefs were called forward, and their ſeveral heaps were ſhewn to them, and committed to their care. They receiv-

ed them with thanks; and beckoning to their warriors, a number of young men quickly ſtarted from the crowd, and in leſs than three minutes the preſents were conveyed from the lawn, and laden on board the canoes, in waiting to convey them to the iſland and adjacent villages. The utmoſt regularity and propriety was manifeſted on this occaſion in the behaviour of every Indian; there was not the ſmalleſt wrangling amongſt them about their preſents; nor was the leaſt ſpark of jealouſy obſervable in any one tribe about what the other had received; each one took up the heap allotted to it, and departed without ſpeaking a word.

Beſides the preſents, ſuch as I have deſcribed, others of a different nature again, namely, proviſions, were dealt out this year amongſt certain tribes of the Indians that were encamped on the iſland of Bois Blanc. Theſe were ſome of the tribes that had been at war with the people of the United States, whoſe villages, fields of corn, and ſtores of proviſions had been totally deſtroyed during the conteſt by General Wayne, and who having been thereby bereft of every means of ſupport, had come, as ſoon as peace was concluded, to beg for ſubſiſtence from their good friends the Britiſh. "Our enemies," ſaid they, have de-"ſtroyed our villages and ſtores of proviſions; "our women and children are left without

"food; do you then, who call yourſelves our "friends, ſhew us now that you really are ſo, "and give them food to eat till the ſun ripens "our corn, and the great ſpirit gives another "proſperous ſeaſon for hunting." Their requeſt was at once complied with; a large ſtorehouſe was erected on the iſland, and filled with proviſions at the expence of government for their uſe, and regularly twice a week the clerks in the Indian department went over to diſtribute them. About three barrels of ſalted pork or beef, as many of flour, beans or peas, Indian corn, and about two carcaſes of freſh beef, were generally given out each time. Theſe articles of proviſion the Indians received, not in the thankful manner in which they did the other preſents, but ſeemingly as if they were due to them of right. One nation they think ought never to heſitate about giving relief to another in diſtreſs, provided it was not at enmity with it; and indeed, were their white brethren, the Britiſh, to be reduced by any calamity to a ſimilar ſtate of diſtreſs, the Indians would with the utmoſt cheerfulneſs ſhare with them their proviſions to the very laſt.

The preſents delivered to the Indians, together with the ſalaries of the officers in the Indian department, are computed to coſt the crown, as I before mentioned, about £. 100,000

ſterling, on an average, per annum. When we firſt gained poſſeſſion of Canada, the expence of the preſents was much greater, as the Indians were then more numerous, and as it was alſo found neceſſary to beſtow upon them, individually, much larger preſents than are now given, in order to overcome the violent prejudices againſt us which had been inſtilled into their minds by the French. Theſe prejudices having happily been removed, and the utmoſt harmony having been eſtabliſhed between them and the people on our frontiers, preſents of a leſs value even than what are now diſtributed amongſt them would perhaps be found ſufficient to keep up that good underſtanding which now ſubſiſts between us; it could not, however, be deemed a very adviſable meaſure to curtail them, as long as a poſſibility remained that the loſs of their friendſhip might be incurred thereby: and, indeed, when we conſider what a happy and numerous people the Indians were before Europeans intruded themſelves into the territories allotted to them by nature; when we conſider how many thouſands have periſhed in battle, embroiled in our conteſts for power and dominion, and how many thouſands more have periſhed by the uſe of the poiſonous beverages which we have introduced amongſt them; when we conſider how many artificial wants have been raiſed

raiſed in the minds of the few nations of them that yet remain, and how ſadly the morals of theſe nations have been corrupted by their intercourſe with the whites; when we conſider, finally, that in the courſe of fifty years more no veſtige even of theſe once virtuous and amiable people will probably be found in the whole of that extenſive territory which lies between the Miſſiſſippi and the Atlantic, and was formerly inhabited ſolely by them; inſtead of wiſhing to leſſen the value or the number of the few trifles that we find are acceptable to them in their preſent ſtate, we ought rather to be deſirous of contributing ſtill more largely to their comfort and happineſs.

Acceptable preſents are generally found very efficacious in conciliating the affections of any uncivilized nation: they have very great influence over the minds of the Indians; but to conciliate their affections to the utmoſt, preſents alone are not ſufficient; you muſt appear to have their intereſt at heart in every reſpect; you muſt aſſociate with them; you muſt treat them as men that are your equals, and, in ſome meaſure, even adopt their native manners. It was by ſuch ſteps as theſe that the French, when they had poſſeſſion of Canada, gained their favour in ſuch a very eminent manner, and acquired ſo wonderful an aſcendency over them. The old Indians ſtill ſay,

that they never were so happy as when the French had possession of the country; and, indeed, it is a very remarkable fact, which I before mentioned, that the Indians, if they are sick, if they are hungry, if they want shelter from a storm, or the like, will always go to the houses of the old French settlers in preference to those of the British inhabitants. The necessity of treating the Indians with respect and attention is strongly inculcated on the minds of the English settlers, and they endeavour to act accordingly; but still they cannot banish wholly from their minds, as the French do, the idea that the Indians are an inferior race of people to them, to which circumstance is to be attributed the predilection of the Indians for the French rather than them; they all live together, however, on very amicable terms, and many of the English on the frontiers have indeed told me, that if they were but half as honest, and half as well conducted towards one another, as the Indians are towards them, the state of society in the country would be truly enviable.

On the frontiers of the United States little pains have hitherto been taken by the government, and no pains by the people, to gain the good will of the Indians; and the latter, indeed, instead of respecting the Indians as an independent neighbouring nation, have in too many

many inſtances violated their rights as men in the moſt flagrant manner. The conſequence has been, that the people on the frontiers have been involved in all the calamities that they could have ſuffered from an avengeful and cruel enemy. Nightly murders, robberies, maſſacres, and conflagrations have been common. They have hardly ventured to ſtir, at times, beyond the walls of their little habitations; and for whole nights together have they been kept on the watch, in arms, to reſiſt the onſet of the Indians. They have never dared to viſit their neighbours unarmed, nor to proceed alone, in open day, on a journey of a few miles. The gazettes of the United States have daily teemed with the ſhocking accounts of the barbarities committed by the Indians, and volumes would ſcarcely ſuffice to tell the whole of the dreadful tales.

It has been ſaid by perſons of the States, that the Indians were countenanced in committing theſe enormities by people on the Britiſh frontiers, and liberal abuſe has been beſtowed on the government for having aided, by diſtributing amongſt them guns, tomahawks, and other hoſtile weapons. That the Indians were incited by preſents, and other means, to act againſt the people of the colonies, during the American war, muſt be admitted; but that, after peace was concluded, the

the ſame line of conduct was purſued towards them, is an aſperſion equally falſe and malicious. To the conduct of the people of the States themſelves alone, and to no other cauſe, is unqueſtionably to be attributed the continuance of the warfare between them and the Indians, after the definitive treaty of peace was ſigned. Inſtead of then taking the opportunity to reconcile the Indians, as they might eaſily have done by preſents, and by treating them with kindneſs, they ſtill continued hoſtile towards them; they looked upon them, as indeed they ſtill do, merely as wild beaſts, that ought to be baniſhed from the face of the earth; and actuated by that inſatiable ſpirit of avarice, and that reſtleſs and diſſatisfied turn of mind, which I have ſo frequently noticed, inſtead of keeping within their territories, where millions of acres remained unoccupied, but no part, however, of which could be had without being paid for, they croſſed their boundary lines, and fixed themſelves in the territory of the Indians, without ever previouſly gaining the conſent of theſe people. The Indians, nice about their boundary line beyond any other nations, perhaps, in the world, that have ſuch extenſive dominions in proportion to their numbers, made no ſcruple to attack, to plunder, and even to murder theſe intruders, when a fit opportunity

opportunity offered. The whites endeavoured to repel their attacks, and ſhot them with as much unconcern as they would either a wolf or a bear. In their expeditions againſt the white ſettlers, the Indians frequently were driven back with loſs; but their ill ſucceſs only urged them to return with redoubled fury, and their well-known revengeful diſpoſition leading them on all occaſions to ſeek blood for blood, they were not merely ſatisfied with murdering the whole families of the ſettlers who had wounded or killed their chiefs or warriors, but oftentimes, in order to appeaſe the manes of their comrades, they croſſed their boundary line in turn, and committed moſt dreadful depredations amongſt the peaceable white inhabitants in the States, who were in no manner implicated in the ill conduct of the men who had encroached upon the Indian territories. Here alſo, if they happened to be repulſed, or to loſe a friend, they returned to ſeek freſh revenge; and as it ſeldom happened that they did eſcape without loſs, their exceſſes and barbarities, inſtead of diminiſhing, were becoming greater every year. The attention of the government was at laſt directed towards the melancholy ſituation of the ſettlers on the frontiers, and the reſult was, that congreſs determined that an army ſhould be raiſed, at the expence of the States, to repel the foe.

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An army was accordingly raiſed ſome time about the year 1790, which was put under the command of General St. Clair. It conſiſted of about fifteen hundred men; but theſe were not men that had been accuſtomed to contend againſt Indians, nor was the General, although an experienced officer, and well able to conduct an army againſt a regular force, at all qualified, as many perſons had foreſeen, and the event proved, to command on an expedition of ſuch a nature as he was now about to be engaged in.

St. Clair advanced with his army into the Indian territory; occaſional ſkirmiſhes took place, but the Indians ſtill kept retreating before him, as if incapable of making any reſiſtance againſt ſuch a powerful force. Forgetful of the ſtratagems of the artful enemy he had to contend with, he boldly followed, till at laſt, having been drawn far into their territory, and to a ſpot ſuitable to their purpoſe, the Indians attacked him on all ſides; his men were thrown into confuſion; in vain he attempted to rally them. The Indians, emboldened by the diſorder they ſaw in his ranks, came ruſhing down with their tomahawks and ſcalping knives. A dreadful havoc enſued. The greater part of the army was left dead on the fatal field; and of thoſe that eſcaped the knife, the moſt were taken priſoners.

ſoners. All the cannon, ammunition, baggage, and horſes of St. Clair's army fell into the hands of the Indians on this occaſion.

A great many young Canadians, and in particular many that were born of Indian women, fought on the ſide of the Indians in this action, a circumſtance which confirmed the people of the States in the opinion they had previouſly formed, that the Indians were encouraged and abetted in their attacks upon them by the Britiſh. I can ſafely affirm, however, from having converſed with many of theſe young men who fought againſt St. Clair, that it was with the utmoſt ſecrecy they left their homes to join the Indians, fearful leſt the government ſhould cenſure their conduct; and that in eſpouſing the quarrel of the Indians, they were actuated by a deſire to aſſiſt a people whom they conceived to be injured, more than by an unextinguiſhed ſpirit of reſentment againſt men, whom they had formerly viewed in the light of rebels.

As the revenge of the Indians was completely glutted by this victory over St. Clair, it is not improbable, but that if pains had been taken immediately to negociate a peace with them, it might have been obtained on eaſy terms; and had the boundary line then determinately agreed upon been faithfully obſerved afterwards by the people of the States, there is great

great reaſon to imagine that the peace would have been a permanent one. As this, however, was a queſtionable meaſure, and the general opinion was, that a peace could be made on better terms if preceded by a victory on the part of the States, it was determined to raiſe another army. Liberal ſupplies for that purpoſe were granted by congreſs, and three thouſand men were ſoon collected together.

Great pains were taken to enliſt for this new army men from Kentucky, and other parts of the frontiers, who had been accuſtomed to the Indian mode of fighting; and a ſufficient number of rifle-men from the frontier were collected, to form a very large regiment. The command of the new army was given to the late General Wayne. Upon being appointed to it, his firſt care was to introduce ſtrict diſcipline amongſt his troops; he afterwards kept the army in motion on the frontier, but he did not attempt to penetrate far into the Indian country, nor to take any offenſive meaſures againſt the enemy for ſome time. This delay the General conceived would be attended with two great advantages; firſt, it would ſerve to baniſh from the minds of his men all recollection of the defeat of the late army; and ſecondly, it would afford him an opportunity of training perfectly to the Indian mode of fighting ſuch of his men as were ignorant

norant of it; for he saw no hopes of success but in fighting the Indians in their own way.

When the men were sufficiently trained he advanced, but it was with the utmost caution. He seldom proceeded farther than twelve miles in one day; the march was always ended by noon, and the afternoon was regularly employed in throwing up strong intrenchments round the camp, in order to secure the army from any sudden attack; and the spot that had been thus fortified on one day was never totally abandoned until a new encampment had been made on the ensuing one. Moreover, strong posts were established at the distance of forty miles, or thereabouts, from each other, in which guards were left, in order to ensure a safe retreat to the army in case it should not be successful. As he advanced, General Wayne sent detachments of his army to destroy all the Indian villages that were near him, and on these occasions the deepest stratagems were made use of. In some instances his men threw off their clothes, and by painting their bodies, disguised themselves so as to resemble Indians in every respect, then approaching as friends, they committed dreadful havoc. Skirmishes also frequently took place, on the march, with the Indians who hovered round the army. These terminated with various success, but mostly in favour of the Americans; as in their conduct,

conduct, the knowledge and discipline of regular troops were combined with all the cunning and stratagem of their antagonists.

All this time the Indians kept retreating, as they had done formerly before St. Clair; and without being able to bring on a decisive engagement, General Wayne proceeded even to the Miami of the Lakes, so called in contradistinction to another River Miami, which empties itself into the Ohio. Here it was that that curious correspondence in respect to Fort Miami took place, the substance of which was related in most of the English and American prints, and by which General Wayne exposed himself to the censure of many of his countrymen, and General, then Colonel Campbell, who commanded in the fort, gained the public thanks of the traders in London.

The Miami Fort, situated on the river of the same name, was built by the English in the year 1793, at which time there was some reason to imagine that the disputes existing between Great Britain and the United States would not have been quite so amicably settled, perhaps, as they have been; at least that doubtless must have been the opinion of government, otherwise they would not have given orders for the construction of a fort within the boundary line of the United States, a circumstance which could not fail to excite the indignation

nation of the people thereof. General Wayne, it would appear, had received no positive orders from his government to make himself master of it: could he have gained possession of it, however, by a coup-de-main, without incurring any loss, he thought that it could not but have been deemed an acceptable piece of service by the public, from whom he should have received unbounded applause. Vanity was his ruling passion, and actuated by it on this occasion, he resolved to try what he could do to obtain possession of the fort. Colonel Campbell, however, by his spirited and manly answer to the summons that was sent him, to surrender the fort on account of its being situated within the boundary line of the States, soon convinced the American general that he was not to be shaken by his remonstrances or intimidated by his menaces, and that his two hundred men, who composed the garrison, had sufficient resolution to resist the attacks of his army of three thousand, whenever he thought proper to march against the fort. The main division of the American army, at this time, lay at the distance of about four miles from the fort; a small detachment from it, however, was concealed in the woods at a very little distance from the fort, to be ready at the call of General Wayne, who, strange to tell, when he found he was not likely to get possession of

it in conſequence of the ſummons he ſent, was ſo imprudent, and departed ſo much from the dignity of the general and the character of the ſoldier, as to ride up to the fort, and to uſe the moſt groſs and illiberal language to the Britiſh ſoldiers on duty in it. His object in doing ſo was, I ſhould ſuppoſe, to provoke the garriſon to fire upon him, in which caſe he would have had a pretext for ſtorming the fort.

Owing to the great prudence, however, of Colonel Campbell, who had iſſued the ſtricteſt orders to his men and officers to remain ſilent, notwithſtanding any inſults that were offered to them, and not to attempt to fire, unleſs indeed an actual attack were made on the place, Wayne's plan was fruſtrated, much bloodſhed certainly ſaved, and a ſecond war between Great Britain and America perhaps averted.

General Wayne gained no great perſonal honour by his conduct on this occaſion; but the circumſtance of his having appeared before the Britiſh fort in the manner he did operated ſtrongly in his favour in reſpect to his proceedings againſt the Indians. Theſe people had been taught to believe by the young Canadians that were amongſt them, that if any part of the American army appeared before the fort, it would certainly be fired upon; for they had no idea that the Americans would have

have come in ſight of it without taking offenſive meaſures, in which caſe reſiſtance would certainly have been made. When, therefore, it was heard that General Wayne had not been fired upon, the Indians complained grievouſly of their having been deceived, and were greatly diſheartened on finding that they were to receive no aſſiſtance from the Britiſh. Their native courage, however, did not altogether forſake them; they reſolved ſpeedily to make a ſtand, and accordingly having choſen their ground, awaited the arrival of General Wayne, who followed them cloſely.

Preparatory to the day on which they expected a general engagement, the Indians, contrary to the uſages of moſt nations, obſerve a ſtrict faſt; nor does this abſtinence from all ſorts of food diminiſh their exertions in the field, as from their early infancy they accuſtom themſelves to faſting for long periods together. The day before General Wayne was expected, this ceremony was ſtrictly attended to, and afterwards, having placed themſelves in ambuſh in the woods, they waited for his arrival. He did not, however, come to the ground on the day that they had imagined, from the reports given them by their ſcouts of his motions, he would have done; but having reaſon to think he would come on the ſubſequent day, they did not move from their ambuſh. The

ſecond day paſſed over without his drawing nearer to them; but fully perſuaded that he would come up with them on the next, they ſtill lay concealed in the ſame place. The third day proved to be extremely rainy and tempeſtuous; and the ſcouts having brought word, that from the movements General Wayne had made there was no likelihood of his marching towards them that day, the Indians, now hungry after having faſted for three entire days, determined to riſe from their ambuſh in order to take ſome refreſhment. They accordingly did ſo, and having no ſuſpicion of an attack, began to eat their food in ſecurity.

Before they began to eat, the Indians had divided themſelves, I muſt obſerve, into three diviſions, in order to march to another quarter, where they hoped to ſurpriſe the army of the States. In this ſituation, however, they were themſelves ſurpriſed by General Wayne. He had received intelligence from his ſcouts, now equally cunning with thoſe of the Indians, of their proceedings, and having made ſome motions as if he intended to move to another part of the country, in order to put them off their guard, he ſuddenly turned, and ſent his light horſe pouring down on them when they leaſt expected it. The Indians were thrown into confuſion, a circumſtance which with them never fails to occaſion a defeat; they made but a faint

a faint reſiſtance, and then fled with precipitancy.

On his arrival at Philadelphia, in the beginning of the year 1796, I was introduced to General Wayne, and I had then an opportunity of ſeeing the plan of all his Indian campaigns. A moſt pompous account was given of this victory, and the plan of it excited, as indeed it well might, the wonder and admiration of all the old officers who ſaw it. The Indians were repreſented as drawn up in three lines, one behind the other, and after receiving with firmneſs the charge of the American army, as endeavouring with great ſkill and adroitneſs to turn its flanks, when, by the ſudden appearance of the Kentucky riflemen and the light cavalry, they were put to flight. From the regularity with which the Indians fought on this occaſion, it was argued that they muſt doubtleſs have been conducted by Britiſh officers of ſkill and experience. How abſurd this whole plan was, however, was plainly to be deduced from the following circumſtance, allowed both by the general and his aides de camp, namely, that during the whole action the American army did not ſee fifty Indians; and indeed every perſon who has read an account of the Indians muſt know that they never come into the field in ſuch regular array, but always fight under covert,

behind trees or buſhes, in the moſt irregular manner. Notwithſtanding the great pains that were taken formerly, both by the French and Engliſh, they never could be brought to fight in any other manner. It was in this manner, and no other, as I heard from ſeveral men who were in the action with them, that they fought againſt General Wayne; each one, as ſoon as the American troops were deſcried, inſtantly ſheltered himſelf, and in retreating they ſtill kept under covert. It was by fighting them alſo in their own way, and by ſending parties of his light troops and cavalry to rout them from their lurking places, that General Wayne defeated them; had he attempted to have drawn up his army in the regular order deſcribed in the plan, he could not but have met with the ſame fate as St. Clair, and general Braddock did on a former occaſion.

Between thirty and forty Indians, who had been ſhot or bayoneted as they attempted to run from one tree to another, were found dead on the field by the American army. It is ſuppoſed that many more were killed, but the fact of the matter could never be aſcertained by them: a profound ſilence was obſerved on the ſubject by the Indians, ſo that I never could learn accurately how many of them had fallen; that however is an immaterial circumſtance; ſuffice it to ſay that the engagement

ſoon

ſoon induced the Indians to ſue for a peace. Commiſſioners were deputed by the government of the United States to meet their chiefs; the preliminaries were ſoon arranged, and a treaty was concluded, by which the Indians relinquiſhed a very conſiderable part of their territory, bordering upon that of the United States.

The laſt and principal ceremony obſerved by the Indians in concluding a peace, is that of burying the hatchet. When this ceremony came to be performed, one of the chiefs aroſe, and lamenting that the laſt peace concluded between them and the people of the States had remained unbroken for ſo ſhort a time, and expreſſing his deſire that this one ſhould be more laſting, he propoſed the tearing up of a large oak that grew before them, and the burying of the hatchet under it, where it would for ever remain at reſt. Another chief ſaid, that trees were liable to be levelled by the ſtorms; that at any rate they would decay; and that as they were deſirous that a perpetual peace ſhould be eſtabliſhed between them and their late enemies, he conceived it would be better to bury the hatchet under the tall mountain which aroſe behind the wood. A third chief in turn addreſſed the aſſembly: "As "for me," ſaid he, "I am but a man, and I "have not the ſtrength of the great ſpirit to

" tear up the trees of the foreſt by the roots, " or to remove mountains, under which to " bury the hatchet; but I propoſe that the " hatchet may be thrown into the deep lake, " where no mortal can ever find it, and where " it will remain buried for ever." This propoſal was joyfully accepted by the aſſembly, and the hatchet was in conſequence caſt with great ſolemnity into the water. The Indians now tell you, in their figurative language, that there muſt be peace for ever. " On former " times," ſay they, " when the hatchet was " buried, it was only ſlightly covered with a " little earth and a few leaves, and being " always a very troubleſome reſtleſs creature, " it ſoon contrived to find its way aboveground, " where it never failed to occaſion great con- " fuſion between us and our white brethren, " and to knock a great many good people on " the head; but now that it has been thrown " into the deep lake, it can never do any more " miſchief amongſt us; for it cannot riſe of " itſelf to the ſurface of the lake, and no one " can go to the bottom to look for it." And that there would be a permanent peace between them I have no doubt, provided that the people of the States would obſerve the articles of the treaty as punctually as the Indians; but it requires little ſagacity to predict that this will not be the caſe, and that ere long the hatchet

hatchet will be again reſumed. Indeed, a little time before we reached Malden, meſſengers from the ſouthern Indians had arrived to ſound the diſpoſition of thoſe who lived near the lake, and try if they were ready and willing to enter into a freſh war. Nor is this eagerneſs for war to be wondered at, when from the report of the commiſſioners, who were ſent down by the federal government to the new ſtate of Tenaſſee, in order to put the treaty into effect, and to mark out the boundaries of that ſtate in particular, it appeared that upwards of five thouſand people, contrary to the ſtipulation of the treaty lately entered into with the Indians, had encroached upon, and ſettled themſelves down in Indian territory, which people, the commiſſioners ſaid, could not be perſuaded to return, and in their opinion could not be forced back again into the States without very great difficulty *.

A large portion of the back ſettlers, living upon the Indian frontiers, are, according to the beſt of my information, far greater ſavages than the Indians themſelves. It is nothing uncommon, I am told, to ſee hung up in their chimney corners, or nailed againſt the door of

* The ſubſtance of this report appeared in an extract of a letter from Lexington, in Kentucky, which I myſelf ſaw, and which was publiſhed in many of the newſpapers in the United States.

their

their habitations, ſimilarly to the ears or bruſh of a fox, the ſcalps which they have themſelves torn from the heads of the Indians whom they have ſhot; and in numberleſs publications in the United States I have read accounts of their having flayed the Indians, and employed their ſkins as they would have done thoſe of a wild beaſt, for whatever purpoſe they could be applied to. An Indian is conſidered by them as nothing better than a deſtructive ravenous wild beaſt, without reaſon, without a ſoul, that ought to be hunted down like a wolf wherever it makes its appearance; and indeed, even amongſt the bettermoſt ſort of the inhabitants of the weſtern country, the moſt illiberal notions are entertained reſpecting theſe unfortunate people, and arguments for their baniſhment, or rather extirpation, are adopted, equally contrary to juſtice and to humanity. "The Indian," ſay they, "who has "no idea, or at leaſt is unwilling to apply him-"ſelf to agriculture, requires a thouſand acres "of land for the ſupport of his family; an hun-"dred acres will be enough for one of us and "our children; why then ſhould theſe hea-"thens, who have no notion of arts and ma-"nufactures, who never have made any im-"provement in ſcience, and have never been "the inventors of any thing new or uſeful to "the human ſpecies, be ſuffered to encumber

"the

" the ſoil?" " The ſettlements making in the " upper parts of Georgia, upon the fine lands " of the Oconec and Okemulgee rivers, will," ſays Mr. Imlay, ſpeaking of the probable deſtination of the Indians of the ſouth weſtern territory, " bid defiance to them in that quar- " ter. The ſettlements of French Broad, aided " by Holſton, have nothing to fear from them; " and the Cumberland is too puiſſant to appre- " hend any danger. The Spaniards are in " poſſeſſion of the Floridas (how long they " will remain ſo muſt depend upon their mo- " deration and good manners) and of the ſet- " tlements at the Natchez and above, which " will ſoon extend to the ſouthern bounda- " ries of Cumberland, ſo that they (the In- " dians) will be completely enveloped in a few " years. Our people (alluding to thoſe of the " United States) will continue to *encroach* upon " them on three ſides, and *compel* them to live " more domeſtic lives, and aſſimilate them to " our mode of living, or croſs to the weſtern " ſide of the Miſſiſſippi."

O Americans! ſhall we praiſe your juſtice and your love of liberty, when thus you talk of encroachments and compulſion? Shall we commend your moderation, when we ſee ye eager to gain freſh poſſeſſions, whilſt ye have yet millions of acres within your own territories unoccupied? Shall we reverence your re-

gard

gard for the rights of human nature, when we ſee ye bent upon baniſhing the poor Indian from the land where reſt the bones of his anceſtors, to him more precious than your cold hearts can imagine, and when we ſee ye tyrannizing over the hapleſs African, becauſe nature has ſtamped upon him a complexion different from your own?

The conduct of the people of the States towards the Indians appears the more unreaſonable and the more iniquitous, when it is conſidered that they are dwindling faſt away of themſelves; and that in the natural order of things there will not probably be a ſingle tribe of them found in exiſtence in the weſtern territory by the time that the numbers of the white inhabitants of the country become ſo numerous as to render land one half as valuable there as it is at preſent within ten miles of Philadelphia or New York. Even in Canada, where the Indians are treated with ſo much kindneſs, they are diſappearing faſter, perhaps, than any people were ever known to do before them, and are making room every year for the whites; and it is by no means improbable, but that at the end of fifty years there will not be a ſingle Indian to be met with between Quebec and Detroit, except the few perhaps that may be induced to lead quiet domeſtic lives, as a ſmall number now does in

the village of Lorette near Quebec, and at ſome other places in the lower province.

It is well known, that before Europeans got any footing in North America, the increaſe of population amongſt the Indian nations was very ſlow, as it is at this day amongſt thoſe who remain ſtill unconnected with the whites. Various reaſons have been aſſigned for this. It has been aſſerted, in the firſt place, that the Indian is of a much cooler temperament than the white man, has leſs ardour in purſuit of the female, and is furniſhed with leſs noble organs of generation. This aſſertion is perhaps true in part: they are chaſte to a proverb when they come to Philadelphia, or any other of the large towns, though they have a predilection in general for white women, and might there readily indulge their inclination; and there has never been an inſtance that I can recollect, of their offering violence to a female priſoner, though oftentimes they have carried off from the ſettlements very beautiful women; that, however, they ſhould not have been gifted by the Creator with ample powers to propagate their ſpecies would be contrary to every thing we ſee either in the animal or the vegetable world; it ſeems to be with more juſtice that their ſlow increaſe is aſcribed to the conduct of the women. The dreadful practice amongſt them, of proſtituting themſelves at a very

very early age, cannot fail, I ſhould imagine, to vitiate the humours, and muſt have a tendency to occaſion ſterility. Added to this, they ſuckle the few children they have for ſeveral years, during which time, at leaſt amongſt many of the tribes, they avoid all connection with their huſbands; moreover, finding great inconveniency attendant upon a ſtate of pregnancy, when they are following their huſbands, in the hunting ſeaſon, from one camp to another, they have been accuſed of making uſe of certain herbs, the ſpecific virtues of which they are well acquainted with, in order to procure abortion.

If one or more of theſe cauſes operated againſt the rapid increaſe of their numbers before the arrival of Europeans on the continent, the ſubſequent introduction of ſpirituous liquors amongſt them, of which both men and women drink to the greateſt exceſs whenever an opportunity offers, was ſufficient in itſelf not only to retard this ſlow increaſe, but even to occaſion a diminution of their numbers. Intermittent fevers and various other diſorders, whether ariſing from an alteration in the climate, owing to the clearing of the woods, or from the uſe of the poiſonous beverages introduced amongſt them by the whites, it is hard to ſay, have likewiſe contributed much of late years to diminiſh their numbers. The Shawneſe,

Shawneſe, one of the moſt warlike tribes, has been leſſened nearly one half by ſickneſs. Many other reaſons could be adduced for their decreaſe, but it is needleſs to enumerate them. That their numbers have gradually leſſened, as thoſe of the whites have increaſed, for two centuries paſt, is incontrovertible; and they are too much attached to old habits to leave any room to imagine that they will vary their line of conduct, in any material degree, during years to come, ſo that they muſt of conſequence ſtill continue to decreaſe.

In my next letter I intend to communicate to you a few obſervations that I have made upon the character, manners, cuſtoms, and perſonal and mental qualifications, &c. of the Indians. So much has already been written on theſe ſubjects, that I fear I ſhall have little to offer to your peruſal but what you may have read before. I am induced to think, however, that it will not be wholly unpleaſing to you to hear the obſervations of others confirmed by me, and if you ſhould meet with any thing new in what I have to ſay, it will have the charm of novelty at leaſt to recommend it to your notice. I am not going to give you a regular detail of Indian manners, &c.; it would be abſurd in me, who have only been with them for a few weeks, to attempt to do ſo. If you wiſh to have an account of

Indian

Indian affairs at large, you muſt read Le P. Charlevoix, Le P. Hennipin, Le Hontan, Carver, &c. &c. who have each written volumes on the ſubject.

LETTER XXXV.

A brief Account of the Perſons, Manners, Character, Qualifications, mental and corporeal, of the Indians; interſperſed with Anecdotes.

Malden.

WHAT I ſhall firſt take notice of in the perſons of the Indians, is the colour of their ſkins, which, in fact, conſtitutes the moſt ſtriking diſtinction between their perſons and ours. In general their ſkin is of a copper caſt; but a moſt wonderful difference of colour is obſervable amongſt them; ſome, in whoſe veins there is no reaſon to think that any other than Indian blood flows, not having darker complexions than natives of the ſouth of France or of Spain, whilſt others, on the contrary, are nearly as black as negroes. Many perſons, and particularly ſome of the moſt reſpectable of the French miſſionaries, whoſe long reſidence amongſt the Indians ought to have

have made them competent judges of the matter, have been of opinion, that their natural colour does not vary from ours; and that the darkneſs of their complexion ariſes wholly from their anointing themſelves ſo frequently with unctuous ſubſtances, and from their expoſing themſelves ſo much to the ſmoke of wood fires, and to the burning rays of the ſun. But although it is certain that they think a dark complexion very becoming; that they take great pains from their earlieſt age to acquire ſuch an one; and that many of them do, in proceſs of time, contrive to vary their original colour very conſiderably; although it is certain likewiſe, that when firſt born their colour differs but little from ours; yet it appears evident to me, that the greater part of them are indebted for their different hues to nature alone. I have been induced to form this opinion from the following conſideration, namely; that thoſe children which are born of parents of a dark colour are almoſt univerſally of the ſame dark caſt as thoſe from whom they ſprang. Nekig, that is, The Little Otter, an Ottoway chief of great notoriety, whoſe village is on Detroit River, and with whom we have become intimately acquainted, has a complexion that differs but little from that of an African; and his little boys, who are the very image of the father, are juſt as

black as himself. With regard to Indian children being white on their first coming into the world, it ought by no means to be concluded from thence, that they would remain so if their mothers did not bedaub them with grease, herbs, &c. as it is well known that negro children are not perfectly black when born, nor indeed for many months afterwards, but that they acquire their jetty hue gradually, on being exposed to the air and sun, just as in the vegetable world the tender blade, on first peeping above ground, turns from white to a pale greenish colour, and afterwards to a deeper green.

Though I remarked to you in a former letter, that the Mississaguis, who live about Lake Ontario, were of a much darker cast than any other tribe of Indians I met with, yet I do not think that the different shades of complexion observable amongst the Indians are so much confined to particular tribes as to particular families; for even amongst the Mississaguis I saw several men that were comparatively of a very light colour. Judging of the Creeks, Cherokees, and other southern Indians, from what I have seen of them at Philadelphia, and at other towns in the States, whither they often come in large parties, led either by business or curiosity, it appears to me that their skin has a redder tinge, and more warmth of colouring in

in it, if I may uſe the expreſſion, than that of the Indians in the neighbourhood of the lakes; it appears to me alſo, that there is leſs difference of colour amongſt them than amongſt thoſe laſt mentioned.

Amongſt the female Indians alſo, in general, there is a much greater ſameneſs of colour than amongſt the men. I do not recollect to have ſeen any of a deeper complexion than what might be termed a dirty copper colour.

The Indians univerſally have long, ſtraight, black, coarſe hair, and black eyes, rather ſmall than full ſized; they have, in general, alſo, high prominent cheek bones, and ſharp ſmall noſes, rather inclining to an aquiline ſhape; they have good teeth, and their breath, in general, is as ſweet as that of a human being can be. The men are for the moſt part very well made; it is a moſt rare circumſtance to meet with a deformed perſon amongſt them: they are remarkably ſtraight; have full open cheſts; their walk is firm and erect, and many amongſt them have really a dignified deportment. Very few of them are under the middle ſtature, and none of them ever become very fat or corpulent. You may occaſionally ſee amongſt them ſtout robuſt men, cloſely put together, but in general they are but ſlightly made. Their legs, arms, and hands, are for the moſt part extremely well ſhaped; and very

many amongſt them would be deemed handſome men in any country in the world.

The women, on the contrary, are moſtly under the middle ſize; and have higher cheek bones, and rounder faces than the men. They have very ungraceful carriages; walk with their toes turned conſiderably inwards, and with a ſhuffling gait; and as they advance in years they grow remarkably fat and coarſe. I never ſaw an Indian woman of the age of thirty, but what her eyes were ſunk, her forehead wrinkled, her ſkin looſe and ſhrivelled, and her whole perſon, in ſhort, forbidding; yet, when young, their faces and perſons are really pleaſing, not to ſay ſometimes very captivating. One could hardly imagine, without witneſſing it, that a few years could poſſibly make ſuch an alteration as it does in their perſons This ſudden change is chiefly owing to the drudgery impoſed on them by the men after a certain age; to their expoſing themſelves ſo much to the burning rays of the ſun; ſitting ſo continually in the ſmoke of wood fires; and, above all, to the general cuſtom of proſtituting themſelves at a very early age.

Though the Indians are profuſely furniſhed with hair on their heads, yet on none of the other parts of the body, uſually covered with it amongſt us, is the ſmalleſt ſign of hair viſible, except, indeed, on the chins of old men, where a few

a few ſlender ſtraggling hairs are ſometimes ſeen, not different from what may be occaſionally ſeen on women of a certain age in Europe. Many perſons have ſuppoſed that the Indians have been created without hair on thoſe parts of the body where it appears wanting; others, on the contrary, are of opinion, that nature has not been leſs bountiful to them than to us; and that this apparent deficiency of hair is wholly owing to their plucking it out themſelves by the roots, as ſoon as it appears above the ſkin. It is well known, indeed, that the Indians have a great diſlike to hair, and that ſuch of the men as are ambitious of appearing gayer than the reſt, pluck it not only from their eye-brows and eye-laſhes, but alſo from every part of the head, except one ſpot on the back part of the crown, where they leave a long lock. For my own part, from every thing I have ſeen and heard, I am fully perſuaded, that if an Indian were to lay aſide this cuſtom of plucking out the hair, he would not only have a beard, but likewiſe hair on the ſame parts of the body as white people have; I think, however, at the ſame time, that this hair would be much finer, and not grow as thickly as upon our bodies, notwithſtanding that the hair of their heads is ſo much thicker than ours. The few hairs that are ſeen on the faces of old men are to be attributed to the careleſſneſs of old people about their external appearance.

To pluck out their hair, all ſuch as have any connection with the traders make uſe of a pliable worm, formed of flattened braſs wire. This inſtrument is cloſely applied, in its open ſtate, to the ſurface of the body where the hair grows; it is then compreſſed by the finger and thumb; a great number of hairs are caught at once between the ſpiral evolutions of the wire, and by a ſudden twitch they are all drawn out by the roots. An old ſquaw, with one of theſe inſtruments, would deprive you of your beard in a very few minutes, and a ſlight application of the worm two or three times in the year would be ſufficient to keep your chin ſmooth ever afterwards. A very great number of the white people, in the neighbourhood of Malden and Detroit, from having ſubmitted to this operation, appear at firſt ſight as little indebted to nature for beards as the Indians. The operation is very painful, but it is ſoon over, and when one conſiders how much time and trouble is ſaved and eaſe gained by it in the end, it is only ſurpriſing that more people do not ſummon up reſolution, and patiently ſubmit to it.

The long lock of hair on the top of the head, with the ſkin on which it grows, conſtitutes the true ſcalp; and in ſcalping a perſon that has a full head of hair, an experienced warrior never thinks of taking off more of the ſkin than

than a bit of about the ſize of a crown piece, from the part of the head where this lock is uſually left. They ornament this ſolitary lock of hair with beads, ſilver trinkets, &c. and on grand occaſions with feathers. The women do not pluck any of the hair from off their heads, and pride themſelves upon having it as long as poſſible. They commonly wear it neatly platted up behind, and divided in front on the middle of the forehead. When they wiſh to appear finer than uſual, they paint the ſmall part of the ſkin, which appears on the ſeparation of the hair, with a ſtreak of vermilion; when neatly done, it looks extremely well, and forms a pleaſing contraſt to the jetty black of their hair.

The Indians, who have any dealings with the Engliſh or American traders, and all of them have that live in the neighbourhood, and to the eaſt of the Miſſiſſippi, and in the neighbourhood of the great lakes to the north-weſt, have now totally laid aſide the uſe of furs and ſkins in their dreſs, except for their ſhoes or moccaſins, and ſometimes for their leggings, as they find they can exchange them to advantage for blankets and woollen cloths, &c. which they conſider likewiſe as much more agreeable and commodious materials for wearing apparel. The moccaſin is made of the ſkin of the deer, elk, or buffalo, which is commonly

dreſſed without the hair, and rendered of a deep brown colour by being expoſed to the ſmoke of a wood fire. It is formed of a ſingle piece of leather, with a ſeam from the toe to the inſtep, and another behind, ſimilar to that in a common ſhoe; by means of a thong, it is faſtened round the inſtep, juſt under the ankle-bone, and is thus made to ſit very cloſe to the foot. Round that part where the foot is put in, a flap of the depth of an inch or two is left, which hangs looſely down over the ſtring by which the moccaſin is faſtened; and this flap, as alſo the ſeam, are taſtefully ornamented with porcupine quills and beads: the flap is edged with tin or copper tags filled with ſcarlet hair, if the moccaſin be intended for a man, and with ribands if for a woman. An ornamented moccaſin of this ſort is only worn in dreſs, as the ornaments are expenſive, and the leather ſoon wears out; one of plain leather anſwers for ordinary uſe. Many of the white people on the Indian frontiers wear this kind of ſhoe; but a perſon not accuſtomed to walk in it, or to walk barefoot, cannot wear it abroad, on a rough road, without great inconvenience, as every unevenneſs of ſurface is felt through the leather, which is ſoft and pliable: in a houſe it is the moſt agreeable ſort of ſhoe that can be imagined: the Indians wear it univerſally.

Above

Above the moccaſin all the Indians wear what are called leggings, which reach from the inſtep to the middle of the thigh. They are commonly made of blue or ſcarlet cloth, and are formed ſo as to ſit cloſe to the limbs, like the modern pantaloons; but the edges of the cloth annexed to the ſeam, inſtead of being turned in, are left on the outſide, and are ornamented with beads, ribands, &c. when the leggings are intended for dreſs. Many of the young warriors are ſo deſirous that their leggings ſhould fit them neatly, that they make the ſquaws, who are the tailors, and really very good ones, ſow them tight on their limbs, ſo that they cannot be taken off, and they continue to wear them conſtantly till they are reduced to rags. The leggings are kept up by means of two ſtrings, one on the outſide of each thigh, which are faſtened to a third, that is tied round the waiſt.

They alſo wear round the waiſt another ſtring, from which are ſuſpended two little aprons, ſomewhat more than a foot ſquare, one hanging down before and the other behind, and under theſe a piece of cloth, drawn cloſe up to the body between the legs, forming a ſort of truſs. The aprons and this piece of cloth, which are all faſtened together, are called the breech cloth. The utmoſt ingenuity of the ſquaws is exerted in adorning the little aprons with beads, ribands, &c.

The

The moccaſins, leggings, and breech cloth conſtitute the whole of the dreſs which they wear when they enter upon a campaign, except indeed it be a girdle, from which hangs their tobacco pouch and ſcalping knife, &c.; nor do they wear any thing more when the weather is very warm; but when it is cool, or when they dreſs themſelves to viſit their friends, they put on a ſhort ſhirt, looſe at the neck and wriſts, generally made of coarſe figured cotton or callico of ſome gaudy pattern, not unlike what would be uſed for window or bed curtains at a common inn in England. Over the ſhirt they wear either a blanket, large piece of broad cloth, or elſe a looſe coat made ſomewhat ſimilarly to a common riding frock; a blanket is more commonly worn than any thing elſe. They tie one end of it round their waiſt with a girdle, and then drawing it over their ſhoulders, either faſten it acroſs their breaſts with a ſkewer, or hold the corners of it together in the left hand. One would imagine that this laſt mode of wearing it could not but be highly inconvenient to them, as it muſt deprive them in a great meaſure of the uſe of one hand; yet it is the mode in which it is commonly worn, even when they are ſhooting in the woods; they generally, however, keep the right arm diſengaged when they carry a gun, and draw the blanket over the left ſhoulder.

The

The dreſs of the women differs but very little from that of the men. They wear moccaſins, leggings, and looſe ſhort ſhirts, and like them they throw over their ſhoulders, occaſionally, a blanket or piece of broad cloth, but moſt generally the latter; they do not tie it round their waiſt, however, but ſuffer it to hang down ſo as to hide their legs; inſtead alſo of the breech cloth, they wear a piece of cloth folded cloſely round their middle, which reaches from the waiſt to the knees. Dark blue or green cloths in general are preferred to thoſe of any other colour; a few of the men are fond of wearing ſcarlet.

The women in warm weather appear in the villages without any other covering above their waiſts than theſe ſhirts, or ſhifts if you pleaſe ſo to call them, though they differ in no reſpect from the ſhirts of the men; they uſually, however, faſten them with a broach round the neck. In full dreſs they alſo appear in theſe ſhirts, but then they are covered entirely over with ſilver broaches, about the ſize of a ſixpenny piece. In full dreſs they likewiſe faſten pieces of ribands of various colours to their hair behind, which are ſuffered to hang down to their very heels. I have ſeen a young ſquaw, that has been a favourite with the men, come forth at a dance with upwards of five guineas worth of ribands ſtreaming from her hair.

On

On their wriſts the women wear ſilver bracelets when they can procure them; they alſo wear ſilver ear-rings; the latter are in general of a very ſmall ſize; but it is not merely one pair which they wear, but ſeveral. To admit them, they bore a number of holes in their ears, ſometimes entirely round the edges. The men wear ear-rings likewiſe, but of a ſort totally different from thoſe worn by the women; they moſtly conſiſt of round flat thin pieces of ſilver, about the ſize of a dollar, perforated with holes in different patterns; others, however, equally large, are made in a triangular form. Some of the tribes are very ſelect in the choice of the pattern, and will not wear any but the one ſort of pendants. Inſtead of boring their ears, the men ſlit them along the outward edge from top to bottom, and as ſoon as the gaſh is healed hang heavy weights to them in order to ſtretch the rim thus ſeparated as low down as poſſible. Some of them are ſo ſucceſsful in this operation, that they contrive to draw the rims of the ear in form of a bow, down to their very ſhoulders, and their large ear-rings hang dangling on their breaſts. To prevent the rim thus extended from breaking, they bind it with braſs wire; however, I obſerved that there was not one in ſix that had his ears perfect; the leaſt touch, indeed, is ſufficient

ſufficient to break the ſkin, and it would be moſt wonderful if they were able to preſerve it entire, engaged ſo often as they are in drunken quarrels, and ſo often liable to be entangled in thickets whilſt purſuing their game.

Some of the men wear pendants in their noſes, but theſe are not ſo common as ear-rings. The chiefs and principal warriors wear breaſt plates, conſiſting of large pieces of ſilver, ſea ſhells, or the like. Silver gorgets, ſuch as are uſually worn by officers, pleaſe them extremely, and to favourite chiefs they are given out, amongſt other preſents, on the part of government. Another ſort of ornament is likewiſe worn by the men, conſiſting of a large ſilver claſp or bracelet, to which is attached a bunch of hair dyed of a ſcarlet colour, uſually taken from the knee of the buffalo. This is worn on the narrow part of the arm above the elbow, and it is deemed very ornamental, and alſo a badge of honour, for no perſon wears it that has not diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the field. Silver ornaments are univerſally preferred to thoſe of any other metal.

The Indians not only paint themſelves when they go to war, but likewiſe when they wiſh to appear full dreſſed. Red and black are their favourite colours, and they daub themſelves in the moſt fantaſtic manner. I have

ſeen ſome with their faces entirely covered with black, except a round ſpot in the center, which included the upper lip and end of the noſe, which was painted red; others again I have ſeen with their heads entirely black, except a large red round ſpot on each ear; others with one eye black and the other red, &c.; but the moſt common ſtyle of painting I obſerved, was to black their faces entirely over with charcoal, and then wetting their nails, to draw parallel undulating lines on their cheeks. They generally carry a little looking glaſs about them to enable them to diſpoſe of their colours judiciouſly. When they go to war they rub in the paint with greaſe, and are much more particular about their appearance, which they ſtudy to render as horrible as poſſible; they then cover their whole body with red, white, and black paint, and ſeem more like devils than human beings. Different tribes have different methods of painting themſelves.

Though the Indians ſpend ſo much of their time in adorning their perſons, yet they take no pains to ornament their habitations, which for the moſt part are wretched indeed. Some of them are formed of logs, in a ſtyle ſomewhat ſimilar to the common houſes in the United States; but the greater part of them are of a moveable nature, and formed of bark. The bark

bark of the birch tree is deemed preferable to every other ſort, and where it is to be had is always made uſe of; but in this part of the country not being often met with, the bark of the elm tree is uſed in its ſtead. The Indians are very expert in ſtripping it from a tree; and frequently take the entire bark from off the trunk in one piece. The ſkeletons of their huts conſiſt of ſlender poles, and on them the bark is faſtened with ſtrips of the tough rind of ſome young tree: this, if ſound, proves a very effectual defence againſt the weather. The huts are built in various forms: ſome of them have walls on every ſide, doors, and alſo a chimney in the middle of the roof; Others are open on one ſide, and are nothing better than ſhèds. When built in this laſt ſtyle, four of them are commonly placed together, ſo as to form a quadrangle, with the open parts towards the inſide, and a fire common to them all is kindled in the middle. In fine weather theſe huts are agreeable dwellings; but in the depth of winter they muſt be dreadfully uncomfortable. Others of their huts are built in a conical ſhape. The Nandoweſſies, Mr. Carver tells us, live entirely in tents formed of ſkins. A great many of the families that were encamped on the iſland of Bois Blanc, I obſerved, lived in the canvas tents which they had taken from St. Clair's army. Many of the

the Indian nations have no permanent place of reſidence, but move about from one ſpot to another, and in the hunting ſeaſon they all have moveable encampments, which laſt are in general very rude, and inſufficient to give them even tolerable ſhelter from a fall of rain or ſnow. The hunting ſeaſon commences on the fall of the leaf, and continues till the ſnow diſſolves.

In the depth of winter, when the ſnow is frozen on the ground, they form their hunting ſheds of the ſnow itſelf; a few twigs platted together being ſimply placed overhead to prevent the ſnow which forms the roof from falling down. Theſe ſnowy habitations are much more comfortable, and warmer in winter time than any others that can be erected, as they effectually ſcreen you from the keen piercing blaſts of the wind, and a bed of ſnow is far from being uncomfortable. To accuſtom the troops to encamp in this ſtyle, in caſe of a winter campaign, a party of them, headed by ſome of the young officers, uſed regularly to be ſent from Quebec by the late governor, into the woods, there to ſhift for themſelves during the month of February. Care was always taken, however, to ſend with them two or three experienced perſons, to ſhew them how to build the huts, otherwiſe death might have been the conſequence to many.

In

In theſe encampments they always ſleep with their feet to the fire; and indeed in the Indian encampments in general, during cold weather, they ſleep on the ground with their feet to the fire; during mild weather, many of them ſleep on benches of bark in their huts, which are raiſed from two to four feet from the ground.

The utenſils in an Indian hut are very few; one or two braſs or iron kettles procured from the traders, or, if they live removed from them, pots formed of ſtone, together with a few wooden ſpoons and diſhes made by themſelves conſtitute in general the whole of them. A ſtone of a very ſoft texture, called the *ſoap ſtone*, is very commonly found in the back parts of North America, particularly ſuited for Indian workmanſhip. It receives its name from appearing to the touch as ſoft and ſmooth as a bit of ſoap; and indeed it may be cut with a knife almoſt equally eaſily. In Virginia they uſe it powdered for the boxes of their wheels inſtead of greaſe. Soft, however, as is this ſtone, it will reſiſt fire equally with iron. The ſoap ſtone is of a dove colour; others nearly of the ſame quality, are found in the country, of a black and red colour, which are ſtill commonly uſed by the Indians for the bowls of their pipes.

The bark canoes, which the Indians uſe in this part of the country, are by no means ſo neatly formed as thoſe made in the country upon, and to the north of, the River St. Lawrence: they are commonly formed of one entire piece of elm bark, taken from the trunk of the tree, which is bound on ribs formed of ſlender rods of tough wood. There are no ribs, however, at the ends of theſe canoes, but merely at the middle part, where alone it is that paſſengers ever ſit. It is only the center, indeed, which reſts upon the water; the ends are generally raiſed ſome feet above the ſurface, the canoes being of a curved form. They bring them into this ſhape by cutting, nearly midway between the ſtem and ſtern, two deep ſlits, one on each ſide, in the back, and by lapping the disjointed edges one over the other. No pains are taken to make the ends of the canoes water tight, ſince they never touch the water.

On firſt inſpection you would imagine, from its miſerable appearance, that an elm bark canoe, thus conſtructed, were not calculated to carry even a ſingle perſon ſafely acroſs a ſmooth piece of water; it is nevertheleſs a remarkably ſafe ſort of boat, and the Indians will reſolutely embark in one of them during very rough weather. They are ſo light that they ride ſecurely over every wave, and the only pre-

caution

caution neceſſary in navigating them is to ſit ſteady. I have ſeen a dozen people go ſecurely in one, which might be eaſily carried by a ſingle able-bodied man. When an Indian takes his family to any diſtance in a canoe, the women, the girls, and boys, are furniſhed each with a paddle, and are kept buſily at work; the father of the family gives himſelf no trouble but in ſteering the veſſel.

The Indians that are connected with the traders have now, very generally, laid aſide bows and arrows, and ſeldom take them into their hands, except it be to amuſe themſelves for a few hours, when they have expended their powder and ſhot: their boys, however, ſtill uſe them univerſally, and ſome of them ſhoot with wonderful dexterity. I ſaw a young Shawneſe chief, apparently not more than ten years old, fix three arrows running in the body of a ſmall black ſquirrel, on the top of a very tall tree, and during an hour or two that I followed him through the woods, he ſcarcely miſſed his mark half a dozen times. It is aſtoniſhing to ſee with what accuracy, and at the ſame time with what readineſs, they mark the ſpot where their arrows fall. They will ſhoot away a dozen arrows or more, ſeemingly quite careleſs about what becomes of them, and as inattentive to the ſpot where they fall as if they never expected to find them again, yet

afterwards they will run and pick them every one up without hesitation. The southern Indians are much more expert at the use of the bow than those near the lakes, as they make much greater use of it.

With the gun, it seems to be generally allowed, that the Indians are by no means so good marksmen as the white people. I have often taken them out shooting with me, and I always found them very slow in taking aim; and though they generally hit an object that was still, yet they scarcely ever touched a bird on the wing, or a squirrel that was leaping about from tree to tree.

The expertness of the Indians in throwing the tomahawk is well known. At the distance of ten yards they will fix the sharp edge of it in an object nearly to a certainty. I have been told, however, that they are not fond of letting it out of their hands in action, and that they never attempt to throw it but when they are on the point of overtaking a flying foe, or are certain of recovering it. Some of them will fasten a string of the length of a few feet to the handle of the tomahawk, and will launch it forth, and draw it back again into their hand with great dexterity; they will also parry the thrust or cuts of a sword with the tomahawk very dexterously.

The common tomahawk is nothing more than

than a light hatchet, but the moſt approved ſort has on the back part of the hatchet, and connected with it in one piece, the bowl of a pipe, ſo that when the handle is perforated, the tomahawk anſwers every purpoſe of a pipe: the Indians, indeed, are fonder of ſmoking out of a tomahawk than out of any other ſort of pipe. That formerly given to the Indians by the French traders, inſtead of a pipe, had a large ſpike on the back part of the hatchet; very few of theſe inſtruments are now to be found amongſt them; I never ſaw but one. The tomahawk is commonly worn by the left ſide, ſtuck in a belt.

For the favourite chiefs, very elegant pipe tomahawks, inlaid with ſilver, are manufactured by the armourers in the Indian department. Captain E—— has given me one of this kind, which he had made for himſelf; it is ſo much admired by the Indians, that when they have ſeen it with me, they have frequently aſked me to lend it to them for an hour or ſo to ſmoke out of, juſt as children would aſk for a pretty plaything; they have never failed to return it very punctually.

The armourers here alluded to are perſons kept at the expence of government to repair the arms of the Indians when they happen to break, which is very commonly the caſe.

An Indian child, ſoon after it is born, is

ſwathed with cloths or ſkins, and being then laid on its back, is bound down on a piece of thick board, ſpread over with ſoft moſs. The board is left ſomewhat longer and broader than the child, and bent pieces of wood, like pieces of hoops, are placed over its face to protect it, ſo that if the machine were ſuffered to fall the child would not probably be injured. The women, when they go abroad, carry their children thus tied down on their backs, the board being ſuſpended by a broad band, which they wear round their foreheads. When they have any buſineſs to tranſact at home, they hang the board on a tree, if there be one at hand, and ſet them a ſwinging from ſide to ſide, like a pendulum, in order to exerciſe the children; ſometimes alſo, I obſerved, they unlooſened the children from the boards, and putting them each into a ſort of little hammock, faſtened them between two trees, and there ſuffered them to ſwing about. As ſoon as they are ſtrong enough to crawl about on their hands and feet they are liberated from all confinement, and ſuffered, like young puppies, to run about, ſtark naked, into water, into mud, into ſnow, and, in ſhort, to go whereſoever their choice leads them; hence they derive that vigour of conſtitution which enables them to ſupport the greateſt fatigue, and that indifference to the changes of the weather which they

they poſſeſs in common with the brute creation. The girls are covered with a looſe garment as ſoon as they have attained four or five years of age, but the boys go naked till they are conſiderably older.

The Indians, as I have already remarked, are for the moſt part very ſlightly made, and from a ſurvey of their perſons one would imagine that they were much better qualified for any purſuits that required great agility than great bodily ſtrength. This has been the general opinion of moſt of thoſe who have written on this ſubject. I am induced, however, from what I have myſelf been witneſs to, and from what I have collected from others, to think that the Indians are much more remarkable for their muſcular ſtrength than for their agility. At different military poſts on the frontiers, where this ſubject has been agitated, races, for the ſake of experiment, have frequently been made between ſoldiers and Indians, and provided the diſtance was not great, the Indians have almoſt always been beaten; but in a long race, where ſtrength of muſcle was required, they have without exception been victorious; in leaping alſo the Indians have been infallibly beaten by ſuch of the ſoldiers as poſſeſſed common activity: but the ſtrength of the Indians is moſt conſpicuous in the carrying of burthens on their backs;

they eſteem it nothing to walk thirty miles a day for ſeveral days together under a load of eight ſtone, and they will walk an entire day under a load without taking any refreſhment. In carrying burdens they make uſe of a ſort of frame, ſomewhat ſimilar to what is commonly uſed by a glazier to carry glaſs; this is faſtened by cords, or ſtrips of tough bark or leather, round their ſhoulders, and when the load is fixed upon the broad ledge at the bottom of the frame, two bands are thrown round the whole, one of which is brought acroſs the forehead, and the other acroſs the breaſt, and thus the load is ſupported. The length of way an Indian will travel in the courſe of the day, when unencumbered with a load, is aſtoniſhing. A young Wyandot, who, when peace was about to be made between the Indians and General Wayne, was employed to carry a meſſage from his nation to the American officer, travelled but little ſhort of eighty miles on foot in one day; and I was informed by one of the general's aids-de-camp, who ſaw him when he arrived at the camp, that he did not appear in the leaſt degree fatigued.

Le P. Charlevoix obſerves, that the Indians ſeem to him to poſſeſs many perſonal advantages over us; their ſenſes, in particular, he thinks much finer than ours; their ſight is, indeed, quick and penetrating, and it does not fail

fail them till they are far advanced in years, notwithſtanding that their eyes are expoſed ſo many months each winter to the dazzling whiteneſs of the ſnow, and to the ſharp irritating ſmoke of wood fires. Diſorders in the eyes are almoſt wholly unknown to them; nor is the ſlighteſt blemiſh ever ſeen in their eyes, excepting it be a reſult from ſome accident. Their hearing is very acute, and their ſenſe of ſmelling ſo nice, that they can tell when they are approaching a fire long before it is in ſight.

The Indians have moſt retentive memories; they will preſerve to their deaths a recollection of any place they have once paſſed through; they never forget a face that they have attentively obſerved but for a few ſeconds; at the end of many years they will repeat every ſentence of the ſpeeches that have been delivered by different individuals in a public aſſembly; and has any ſpeech been made in the council houſe of the nation, particularly deſerving of remembrance, it will be handed down with the utmoſt accuracy from one generation to another, though perfectly ignorant of the uſe of hieroglyphicks and letters; the only memorials of which they avail themſelves are ſmall pieces of wood, ſuch as I told you were brought by them to Captain E——, preparatory to the delivery of the preſents, and belts of wampum; the

the former are only uſed on trifling occaſions, the latter never but on very grand and ſolemn ones. Whenever a conference, or a talk as they term it, is about to be held with any neighbouring tribe, or whenever any treaty or national compact is about to be made, one of theſe belts, differing in ſome reſpect from every other that has been made before, is immediately conſtructed; each perſon in the aſſembly holds this belt in his hand whilſt he delivers his ſpeech, and when he has ended, he preſents it to the next perſon that riſes, by which ceremony each individual is reminded, that it behoves him to be cautious in his diſcourſe, as all he ſays will be faithfully recorded by the belt. The talk being over, the belt is depoſited in the hands of the principal chief.

On the ratification of a treaty, very broad ſplendid belts are reciprocally given by the contracting parties, which are depoſited amongſt the other belts belonging to the nation. At ſtated intervals they are all produced to the nation, and the occaſions upon which they were made are mentioned; if they relate to a talk, one of the chiefs repeats the ſubſtance of what was ſaid over them; if to a treaty, the terms of it are recapitulated. Certain of the ſquaws, alſo, are entruſted with the belts, whoſe buſineſs it is to relate the hiſtory of each one of them to the younger branches of the

the tribe; this they do with great accuracy, and thus it is that the remembrance of every important tranſaction is kept up.

The wampum is formed of the inſide of the clam ſhell, a large ſea ſhell bearing ſome ſimilitude to that of a ſcallop, which is found on the coaſts of New England and Virginia. The ſhell is ſent in its original rough ſtate to England, and there cut into ſmall pieces, exactly ſimilar in ſhape and ſize to the modern glaſs bugles worn by ladies, which little bits of ſhell conſtitute wampum. There are two ſorts of wampum, the white and the purple; the latter is moſt eſteemed by the Indians, who think a pound weight of it equally valuable with a pound of ſilver. The wampum is ſtrung upon bits of leather, and the belt is compoſed of ten, twelve, or more ſtrings, according to the importance of the occaſion on which it is made; ſometimes alſo the wampum is ſowed in different patterns on broad belts of leather.

The uſe of wampum appears to be very general amongſt the Indian nations, but how it became ſo, is a queſtion that would require diſcuſſion, for it is well known that they are a people obſtinately attached to old cuſtoms, and that would not therefore be apt to adopt, on the moſt grand and ſolemn occaſion, the uſe of an article that they had never ſeen until brought to them by ſtrangers; at the ſame time

time it ſeems wholly impoſſible that they ſhould ever have been able to have made wampum from the clam ſhell for themſelves; they faſhion the bowls of tobacco pipes, indeed, from ſtone, in a very curious manner, and with aſtoniſhing accuracy, conſidering that they uſe no other inſtrument than a common knife, but then the ſtone which they commonly carve thus is of a very ſoft kind; the clam ſhell, however, is exceedingly hard, and to bore and cut it into ſuch ſmall pieces as are neceſſary to form wampum, very fine tools would be wanting. Probably they made ſome uſe of the clam ſhell, and endeavoured to reduce it to as ſmall bits as they could with their rude inſtruments before we came amongſt them, but on finding that we could cut it ſo much more neatly than they could, laid aſide the wampum before in uſe for that of our manufacture. Mr. Carver tells us, that he found ſea ſhells very generally worn by the Indians who reſided in the moſt interior parts of the continent, who never could have viſited a ſea ſhore themſelves, and could only have procured them at the expence of much trouble from other nations.

The Indians are exceedingly ſagacious and obſervant, and by dint of minute attention, acquire many qualifications to which we are wholly ſtrangers. They will traverſe a trackleſs foreſt, hundreds of miles in extent, with-

out deviating from the ſtraight courſe, and will reach to a certainty the ſpot whither they intended to go on ſetting out: with equal ſkill they will croſs one of the large lakes, and though out of ſight of the ſhores for days, will to a certainty make the land at once, at the very place they deſired. Some of the French miſſionaries have ſuppoſed that the Indians are guided by inſtinct, and have pretended that Indian children can find their way through a foreſt as eaſily as a perſon of maturer years; but this is a moſt abſurd notion. It is unqueſtionably by a cloſe attention to the growth of the trees, and poſition of the ſun, that they find their way. On the northern ſide of a tree, there is generally the moſt moſs, and the bark on that ſide in general differs from that on the oppoſite one. The branches towards the ſouth are for the moſt part more luxuriant than thoſe on the other ſides of trees, and ſeveral other diſtinctions alſo ſubſiſt between the northern and ſouthern ſides, conſpicuous to Indians, who are taught from their infancy to attend to them, which a common obſerver would perhaps never notice. Being accuſtomed from their childhood, likewiſe, to pay great attention to the poſition of the ſun, they learn to make the moſt accurate allowance for its apparent motion from one part of the heavens to another, and in any part of the day they will point

point to the part of the heavens where it is, although the ſky be obſcured by clouds or miſts.

An inſtance of their dexterity in finding their way through an unknown country came under my obſervation when I was at Staunton, ſituated behind the Blue Mountains, Virginia. A number of the Creek nation had arrived at that town in their way to Philadelphia, whither they were going upon ſome affairs of importance, and had ſtopped there for the night. In the morning ſome circumſtance or another, what could not be learned, induced one half of the Indians to ſet off without their companions, who did not follow until ſome hours afterwards. When theſe laſt were ready to purſue their journey, ſeveral of the towns-people mounted their horſes to eſcort them part of the way. They proceeded along the high road for ſome miles, but all at once, haſtily turning aſide into the woods, though there was no path, the Indians advanced confidently forward; the people who accompanied them, ſurpriſed at this movement, informed them that they were quitting the road to Philadelphia, and expreſſed their fears leſt they ſhould miſs their companions, who had gone on before. They anſwered, that they knew better; that the way through the woods was the ſhorteſt to Philadelphia; and that they knew very well that their companions had entered the

the woods at the very place they did. Curiosity led some of the horsemen to go on, and to their astonishment, for there was apparently no track, they overtook the other Indians in the thickest part of the wood; but what appeared most singular was, that the route which they took was found, on examining a map, to be as direct for Philadelphia as if they had taken the bearings by a mariner's compass. From others of their nation, who had been at Philadelphia at a former period, they had probably learned the exact direction of that city from their village, and had never lost sight of it, although they had already travelled three hundred miles through woods, and had upwards of four hundred miles more to go before they could reach the place of their destination.

Of the exactness with which they can find out a strange place that they have been once directed to by their own people, a striking example is furnished us, I think, by Mr. Jefferson, in his account of the Indian graves in Virginia. These graves are nothing more than large mounds of earth in the woods, which, on being opened, are found to contain skeletons in an erect posture: the Indian mode of sepulture has been too often described to remain unknown to you. But to come to my story. A party of Indians that were passing on to some of the sea ports on the Atlantic, just

juſt as the Creeks above mentioned were going to Philadelphia, were obſerved, all on a ſudden, to quit the ſtraight road by which they were proceeding, and without aſking any queſtions, to ſtrike through the woods in a direct line to one of theſe graves, which lay at the diſtance of ſome miles from the road. Now very near a century muſt have paſſed over ſince the part of Virginia, in which this grave was ſituated, had been inhabited by Indians; and theſe Indian travellers, who went to viſit it by themſelves, had, unqueſtionably, never been in that part of the country before; they muſt have found their way to it ſimply from the deſcription of its ſituation that had been handed down to them by tradition.

The Indians, for the moſt part, are admirably well acquainted with the geography of their own country. Aſk them any queſtions relative to the ſituation of a particular place in it, and if there be a convenient ſpot at hand, they will, with the utmoſt facility, trace upon the ground with a ſtick a map, by no means inaccurate, of the place in queſtion, and the ſurrounding country; they will point out the courſe of the rivers, and by directing your attention to the ſun, make you acquainted with the different bearings. I happened once to be ſitting in a houſe at the weſtern extremity of Lake Erie, whilſt we were detained there by contrary

contrary winds, and was employed in looking over a pocket map of the ſtate of New York, when a young Seneka warrior entered. His attention was attracted by the ſight of the map, and he ſeemed at once to comprehend the meaning of it; but never having before ſeen a general map of the ſtate of New York, and being wholly ignorant of the uſe of letters, he could not diſcover to what part of the country it had a reference; ſimply, however, by laying my finger upon the ſpot where we then were, and by ſhewing to him the line that denoted Buffalo Creek, on which his village was ſituated, I gave him the clue to the whole, and having done ſo, he quickly ran over the map, and with the utmoſt accuracy pointed out by name, every lake and river for upwards of two hundred miles diſtant from his village. All the lakes and rivers in this part of the country ſtill retain the Indian names, ſo that had he named them wrong, I could have at once detected him. His pleaſure was ſo great on beholding ſuch a perfect map of the country, that he could not refrain from calling ſome of his companions, who were loitering at the door, to come and look at it. They made ſigns to me to lend it to them; I did ſo, and having laid it on a table, they ſat over it for more than half an hour, during which time I obſerved they frequently teſtified their plea-

ſure to one another on finding particular places accurately laid down, which they had been acquainted with. The older men alſo ſeemed to have many ſtories to tell the others, probably reſpecting the adventures they had met with at diſtant parts of the country, and which they were now glad of having an opportunity of elucidating by the map before them.

Whenever a track of ground is about to be purchaſed by government from the Indians, for no private individuals can purchaſe lands from them by the laws of the province, a map of the country is drawn, and the part about to be contracted for, is particularly marked out. If there be any miſtakes in theſe maps, the Indians will at once point them out; and after the bargain is made, they will, from the maps, mark out the boundaries of the lands they have ceded with the greateſt accuracy, notching the trees, if there be any, along the boundary line, and if not, placing ſtakes or ſtones in the ground to denote where it runs. On theſe occaſions regular deeds of ſale are drawn, with accurate maps of the lands which have been purchaſed attached to them, and theſe deeds are ſigned in form by the contracting parties. I ſaw ſeveral of them in poſſeſſion of our friend Captain E——, which were extremely curious on account of the Indian ſignatures. The Indians, for the moſt part, take upon them the

the name of ſome animal, as, The Blue Snake; The Little Turkey; The Big Bear; The Mad Dog, &c. and their ſignatures conſiſt of the outline, drawn with a pen, of the different animals whoſe names they bear. Some of the ſignatures at the bottom of theſe deeds were really well executed, and were lively repreſentations of the animals they were intended for.

The Indians in general poſſeſs no ſmall ſhare of ingenuity. Their domeſtic wooden utenſils, bows and arrows, and other weapons, &c. are made with the utmoſt neatneſs; and indeed the workmanſhip of them is frequently ſuch as to excite aſtoniſhment, when it is conſidered that a knife and a hatchet are the only inſtruments they make uſe of. On the handles of their tomahawks, on their powder horns, on the bowls of their pipes, &c. you oftentimes meet with figures extremely well deſigned, and with ſpecimens of carving far from contemptible. The embroidery upon their moccaſins and other garments ſhews that the females are not leſs ingenious in their way than the men. Their porcupine quill work would command admiration in any country in Europe. The ſoft young quills of the porcupine are thoſe which they uſe, and they dye them of the moſt beautiful and brilliant colours imaginable. Some of their dyes have been diſcovered, but many of them yet remain un-

known, as do alſo many of the medicines with which they perform ſometimes moſt miraculous cures. Their dyes and medicines are all procured from the vegetable world.

But though the Indians prove by their performances, that they have ſome reliſh for the works of art, yet they are by no means ready to beſtow commendations on every thing curious for its workmanſhip that is ſhewn to them. Trinkets or ornaments for dreſs, though ever ſo gaudy, or ever ſo neatly manufactured, they deſpiſe, unleſs ſomewhat ſimilar in their kind to what they themſelves are accuſtomed to wear, and faſhioned exactly to their own taſte, which has remained nearly the ſame ſince Europeans firſt came amongſt them; nor will they praiſe any curious or wonderful piece of mechaniſm, unleſs they can ſee that it is intended to anſwer ſome uſeful purpoſe. Nothing that I could ſhew them attracted their attention, I obſerved, ſo much as a light double-barrelled gun, which I commonly carried in my hand when walking about their encampments. This was ſomething in their own way; they at once perceived the benefit that muſt accrue to the ſportſman from having two barrels on the one ſtock, and the contrivance pleaſed them; well acquainted alſo with the qualities of good locks, and the advantages attending them, they expreſſed great ſatisfac-

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tion at finding thoſe upon my piece ſo ſuperior to what they perhaps had before ſeen.

It is not every new ſcene either, which to them, one would imagine, could not fail to appear wonderful, that will excite their admiration.

A French writer, I forget who, tells us of ſome Iroquois Indians that walked through ſeveral of the fineſt ſtreets of Paris, but without expreſſing the leaſt pleaſure at any thing they ſaw, until they at laſt came to a cook's ſhop; this called forth their warmeſt praiſe; a ſhop where a man was always ſure of getting ſomething to ſatisfy his hunger, without the trouble and fatigue of hunting and fiſhing, was in their opinion one of the moſt admirable inſtitutions poſſible: had they been told, however, that they muſt have paid for what they eat, they would have expreſſed equal indignation perhaps at what they ſaw. In their own villages they have no idea of refuſing food to any perſon that enters their habitation in quality of a friend.

The Indians, whom curioſity or buſineſs leads to Philadelphia, or to any other of the large towns in the States, find, in general, as little deſerving of notice in the ſtreets and houſes there as theſe Iroquois at Paris; and there is not one of them but what would prefer his own wigwam to the moſt ſplendid habita-

tions they ſee in any of theſe places. The ſhipping, however, at Philadelphia and the other ſea-ports, ſeldom fails to excite their admiration, becauſe they at once ſee the utility and advantage of large veſſels over canoes, which are the only veſſels they have. The young Wyandot, whom I before mentioned, as having made ſuch a wonderful day's journey on foot, happened to be at Philadelphia when I was there, and he appeared highly delighted with the river, and the great number of ſhips of all ſizes upon it; but the tide attracted his attention more than any thing elſe whatſoever. On coming to the river the firſt day, he looked up at the ſun, and made certain obſervations upon the courſe of the ſtream, and general ſituation of the place, as the Indians never fail to do on coming to any new or remarkable ſpot. The ſecond time, however, he went down to the water, he found to his ſurpriſe that the river was running with equal rapidity in a contrary direction to what he had ſeen it run the day before. For a moment he imagined that by ſome miſtake he muſt have got to the oppoſite ſide of it; but ſoon recollecting himſelf, and being perſuaded that he ſtood on the very ſame ſpot from whence he had viewed it the day before, his aſtoniſhment became great indeed. To obtain information upon ſuch an intereſting point, he immediately ſought out

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an aid-de-camp of General Wayne, who had brought him to town. This gentleman, however, only rendered the appearance ſtill more myſterious to him, by telling him, that the great ſpirit, for the convenience of the white men, who were his particular favourites, had made the rivers in their country to run two ways; but the poor Wyandot was ſatisfied with the anſwer, and replied, "Ah, my friend, "if the great ſpirit would make the Ohio to "run two ways for us, we ſhould very often "pay you a viſit at Pittſburgh *." During his ſtay at Philadelphia he never failed to viſit the river every day.

Amongſt the public exhibitions at Philadelphia, the performances of the horſe riders and tumblers at the amphitheatre appear to afford them the greateſt pleaſure; they entertain the higheſt opinion of theſe people who are ſo diſtinguiſhed for their feats of activity, and rank them amongſt the ableſt men in the nation. Nothing, indeed, gives more delight to the Indians than to ſee a man that excels in any bodily exerciſe; and tell them even of a perſon that is diſtinguiſhed for his great ſtrength, for his ſwiftneſs in running, for his dexterous management of the bow or the gun, for his cunning in hunting, for his intrepid

* A town ſituated at the very head of the Ohio.

and firm conduct in war, or the like, they will liſten to you with the greateſt pleaſure, and readily join in praiſes of the hero.

The Indians appear, on the firſt view, to be of a very cold and phlegmatic diſpoſition, and you muſt know them for ſome time before you can be perſuaded to the contrary. If you ſhew them any artificial production which pleaſes them, they ſimply tell you, with ſeeming indifference, " that it is pretty;" " that they like " to look at it;" " that it is a clever inven- " tion:" nor do they teſtify their ſatisfaction and pleaſure by emotions ſeemingly much warmer in their nature, on beholding any new or ſurpriſing ſpectacle, or on hearing any happy piece of intelligence. The performances at the amphitheatre at Philadelphia, though unqueſtionably highly intereſting to them, never drew forth from them, I obſerved, more than a ſmile or a gentle laugh, followed by a remark in a low voice to their friend ſitting next to them. With equal indifference do they behold any thing terrible, or liſten to the accounts of any dreadful cataſtrophe that has befallen their families or their nation. This apathy, however, is only aſſumed, and certainly does not proceed from a real want of feeling: no people on earth are more alive to the calls of friendſhip; no people have a greater affection for their offſpring in their tender years; no people

people are more ſenſible of an injury: a word in the ſlighteſt degree inſulting will kindle a flame in their breaſts, that can only be extinguiſhed by the blood of the offending party; and they will traverſe foreſts for hundreds of miles, expoſed to the inclemency of the ſevereſt weather, and to the pangs of hunger, to gratify their revenge; they will not ceaſe for years daily to viſit, and ſilently to mourn over the grave of a departed child; and they will riſk their lives, and ſacrifice every thing they poſſeſs, to aſſiſt a friend in diſtreſs; but at the ſame time, in their opinion, no man can be eſteemed a good warrior or a dignified character that openly betrays any extravagant emotions of ſurpriſe, of joy, of ſorrow, or of fear, on any occaſion whatſoever. The excellence of appearing thus indifferent to what would excite the ſtrongeſt emotions in the minds of any other people, is forcibly inculcated on them from their earlieſt youth; and ſuch an aſtoniſhing command do they acquire over themſelves, that even at the ſtake, when ſuffering the ſevereſt tortures that can be inflicted on the human body by the flames and the knife, they appear unmoved, and laugh, as it is well-known, at their tormentors.

This affected apathy on the part of the Indians makes them appear uncommonly grave and reſerved in the preſence of ſtrangers; in their

their own private circles, however, they frequently keep up gay and ſprightly converſations; and they are poſſeſſed, it is ſaid, of a lively and ready turn of wit. When at ſuch a place as Philadelphia, notwithſtanding their appearing ſo indifferent to every thing before them whilſt ſtrangers are preſent, yet, after having retired by themſelves to an apartment for the night, they will frequently ſit up for hours together, laughing and talking of what they have ſeen in the courſe of the day. I have been told by perſons acquainted with their language, that have overheard their diſcourſe on ſuch occaſions, that their remarks are moſt pertinent, and that they ſometimes turn what has paſſed before them into ſuch ludicrous points of view, that it is ſcarcely poſſible to refrain from laughter.

But though the Indians, in general, appear ſo reſerved in the preſence of ſtrangers, yet the firmneſs of their diſpoſitions forbids them from ever appearing embarraſſed, and they would ſit down to table in a palace, before the firſt crowned head on the face of the earth, with as much unconcern as they would ſit down to a frugal meal in one of their own cabins. They deem it highly becoming in a warrior, to accommodate his manners to thoſe of the people with whom he may happen to be, and as they are wonderfully obſervant, you

you will ſeldom perceive any thing of awkwardneſs or vulgarity in their behaviour in the company of ſtrangers. I have ſeen an Indian, that had lived in the woods from his infancy, enter a drawing room in Philadelphia, full of ladies, with as much eaſe and as much gentility as if he had always lived in the city, and merely from having been told, preparatory to his entering, the form uſually obſerved on ſuch occaſions. But the following anecdote will put this matter in a ſtronger point of view.

Our friend Nekig, the Little Otter, had been invited to dine with us at the houſe of a gentleman at Detroit, and he came accordingly, accompanied by his ſon, a little boy of about nine or ten years of age. After dinner a variety of fruits were ſerved up, and amongſt the reſt ſome peaches, a diſh of which was handed to the young Indian. He helped himſelf to one with becoming propriety; but immediately afterwards he put the fruit to his mouth, and bit a piece out of it. The father eyed him with indignation, and ſpoke ſome words to him in a low voice, which I could not underſtand, but which, on being interpreted by one of the company, proved to be a warm reprimand for his having been ſo deficient in obſervation as not to peel his peach, as he ſaw the gentleman oppoſite to him

him had done. The little fellow was extremely aſhamed of himſelf; but he quickly retrieved his error, by drawing a plate towards him, and pealing the fruit with the greateſt neatneſs.

Some port wine, which he was afterwards helped to, not being by any means agreeable to his palate, the little fellow made a wry face, as a child might naturally do, after drinking it. This called forth another reprimand from the father, who told him, that he deſpaired of ever ſeeing him a great man or a good warrior if he appeared then to diſlike what his hoſt had kindly helped him to. The boy drank the reſt of his wine with ſeeming pleaſure.

The Indians ſcarcely ever lift their hands againſt their children; but if they are unmindful of what is ſaid to them, they ſometimes throw a little water in their faces, a ſpecies of reprimand of which the children have the greateſt dread, and which produces an inſtantaneous good effect. One of the French miſſionaries tells us of his having ſeen a girl of an advanced age ſo vexed at having ſome water thrown in her face by her mother, as if ſhe was ſtill a child, that ſhe inſtantly retired, and put an end to her exiſtence. As long as they remain children, the young Indians are attentive in the extreme to the advice of their parents;

parents; but arrived at the age of puberty, and able to provide for themſelves, they no longer have any reſpect for them, and they will follow their own will and pleaſure in ſpite of all their remonſtrances, unleſs, indeed, their parents be of an advanced age. Old age never fails to command their moſt profound veneration.

No people are poſſeſſed of a greater ſhare of natural politeneſs than the Indians: they will never interrupt you whilſt you are ſpeaking; nor, if you have told them any thing which they think to be falſe, will they bluntly contradict you; "We dare ſay brother," they will anſwer, "that you yourſelf believe what "you tell us to be true; but it appears to us "ſo improbable that we cannot give our aſſent "to it."

In their conduct towards one another nought but gentleneſs and harmony is obſervable. You are never witneſs, amongſt them, to ſuch noiſy broils and clamorous contentions as are common amongſt the lower claſſes of people in Europe; nor do you perceive amongſt them any traces of the coarſe vulgar manners of theſe latter people; they behave on all occaſions like gentlemen, and could not ſo many glaring proofs be adduced to the contrary, you never could imagine that they were that ferocious ſavage people in war which they are

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ſaid to be. It muſt be underſtood, however, that I only ſpeak now of the Indians in their ſober ſtate; when intoxicated with ſpirits, which is but too often the caſe, a very different picture is preſented to our view, and they appear more like devils incarnate than human beings; they roar, they fight, they cut each other, and commit every ſort of outrage; indeed ſo ſenſible are they of their own infirmities in this ſtate, that when a number of them are about to get drunk, they give up their knives and tomahawks, &c. to one of the party, who is on honour to remain ſober, and to prevent miſchief, and who generally does behave according to this promiſe. If they happen to get drunk without having taken this precaution, their ſquaws take the earlieſt opportunity to deprive them of their weapons.

The Indians prefer whiſkey and rum to all other ſpirituous liquors; but they do not ſeem eager to obtain theſe liquors ſo much for the pleaſure of gratifying their palates as for the ſake of intoxication. There is not one in a hundred that can refrain from drinking to exceſs if he have it in his power; and the generality of them having once got a taſte of any intoxicating liquor, will uſe every means to gain more; and to do ſo they at once become mean, ſervile, deceitful, and depraved, in every ſenſe of the word. Nothing can make

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amends to theſe unfortunate people for the introduction of ſpirituous liquors amongſt them. Before their acquaintance with them, they were diſtinguiſhed beyond all other nations for their temperance in eating and drinking; for their temperance in eating, indeed, they are ſtill remarkable; they eſteem it indecorous in the higheſt degree even to appear hungry; and on arriving at their villages, after having faſted, perhaps, for ſeveral days preceding, they will ſit down quietly, and not aſk for any food for a conſiderable time; and having got wherewith to ſatisfy their appetite, they will eat with moderation, as though the calls of hunger were not more preſſing than if they had feaſted the hour before. They never eat on any occaſion in a hurry.

The Indians are by nature of a very hoſpitable generous diſpoſition, where no particular circumſtances operate to the contrary; and, indeed, even when revenge would fain perſuade them to behave differently, yet having once profeſſed a friendſhip for a ſtranger, and pledged themſelves for his ſafety, nothing can induce them to deviate from their word. Of their generoſity I had numberleſs proofs in the preſents which they gave me; and though it muſt be allowed, that when they make preſents they generally expect others in return, yet I am convinced, from the manner in which they

they preſented different trifles to me, that it was not with an expectation of gaining more valuable preſents in return that they gave them to me, but merely through friendſhip. It is notorious, that towards one another they are liberal in the extreme, and for ever ready to ſupply the deficiencies of their neighbours with any ſuperfluities of their own. They have no idea of amaſſing wealth for themſelves individually; and they wonder that perſons can be found in any ſociety, ſo deſtitute of every generous ſentiment, as to enrich themſelves at the expence of others, and to live in eaſe and affluence, regardleſs of the miſery and wretchedneſs of members of the ſame community to which they themſelves belong. Their dreſſes, domeſtic utenſils, and weapons, are the only articles of property to which they lay an excluſive claim; every thing elſe is the common property of the tribe, in promoting the general welfare in which every individual feels himſelf deeply intereſted. The chiefs are actuated by the ſame laudable ſpirit, and inſtead of being the richeſt, are, in many inſtances, the pooreſt perſons in the community; for whilſt others have leiſure to hunt, &c. it frequently happens that the whole of their time is occupied in ſettling the public affairs of the nation.

The generality of the Indian nations appear to have two ſorts of chiefs; council chiefs, and war

war chiefs. The former are hereditary, and are employed principally in the management of their civil affairs; but they may be war chiefs at the ſame time: the latter are choſen from amongſt thoſe who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves the moſt in battle, and are ſolely employed in leading the warriors in the field. The chiefs have no power of enforcing obedience to their commands, nor do they ever attempt to give their orders in an imperious manner; they ſimply adviſe. Each private individual conceives that he is born in a ſtate of perfect liberty, and he diſdains all controul, but that which his own reaſon ſubjects him to. As they all have one intereſt, however, at heart, which is the general welfare of the nation, and as it is well known that the chiefs are actuated by no other motives, whatever meaſures they recommend are generally attended to, and at once adopted. Savages as they are, yet in no civilized community, I fear, on earth, ſhall we find the ſame public ſpirit, the ſame diſintereſtedneſs, and the ſame regard to order, where order is not enforced by the ſeverity of laws, as amongſt the Indians.

The Indians have the moſt ſovereign contempt for any ſet of people that have tamely relinquiſhed their liberty; and they conſider ſuch as have loſt it, even after a hard ſtruggle,

as unworthy any rank in ſociety above that of old women: to this cauſe, and not to the difference that ſubſiſts between their perſons, is to be attributed, I conceive, the rooted averſion which the Indians univerſally have for negroes. You could not poſſibly affront an Indian more readily, than by telling him that you think he bears ſome reſemblance to a negro; or that he has negro blood in his veins: they look upon them as animals inferior to the human ſpecies, and will kill them with as much unconcern as a dog or a cat.

An American officer, who, during the war with Great Britain, had been ſent to one of the Indian nations reſident on the weſtern frontier of the States, to perſuade them to remain neuter in the conteſt, informed me, that whilſt he remained amongſt them ſome agents arrived in their village to negociate, if poſſible, for the releaſe of ſome negro ſlaves whom they had carried off from the American ſettlements. One of theſe negroes, a remarkably tall handſome fellow, had been given to an Indian woman of ſome conſequence in the nation, in the manner in which priſoners are uſually diſpoſed of amongſt them. Application was made to her for his ranſom. She liſtened quietly to what was ſaid; reſolved at the ſame time, however, that the fellow ſhould not have his liberty, ſhe ſtepped aſide into her cabin,

and

and having brought out a large knife, walked up to her ſlave, and without more ado plunged it into his bowels: "Now," ſays ſhe, addreſſing herſelf coolly to the agents; "now "I give you leave to take away your negro." The poor creature that had been ſtabbed fell to the ground, and lay writhing about in the greateſt agonies, until one of the warriors took compaſſion on him, and put an end to his miſery by a blow of a tomahawk.

At Detroit, Niagara, and ſome other places in Upper Canada, a few negroes are ſtill held in bondage. Two of theſe hapleſs people contrived, whilſt we remained at Malden, to make their eſcape from Detroit, by ſtealing a boat, and proceeding in the night down the river. As the wind would not permit them to croſs the lake, it was conjectured that they would be induced to coaſt along the ſhore until they reached a place of ſafety; in hopes, therefore, of being able to recover them, the proprietor came down to Malden, and there procured two truſty Indians to go in queſt of them. The Indians, having received a deſcription of their perſons, ſet out; but had ſcarcely proceeded an hundred yards, when one of them, who could ſpeak a few words of Engliſh, returned, to aſk the proprietor if he would give him permiſſion to ſcalp the negroes if they were at all refractory, or refuſed coming.

His requeſt was peremptorily refuſed, for it was well known that, had it been granted, he would have at once killed them to avoid the trouble of bringing them back. "Well," ſays he, "if you will not let me ſcalp both, "you won't be angry with me, I hope, if I "ſcalp one." He was told in anſwer, that he muſt bring them both back alive. This circumſtance appeared to mortify him extremely, and he was beginning to heſitate about going, when, ſorry am I to ſay, the proprietor, fearful leſt the fellows ſhould eſcape from him, gave his aſſent to the Indian's requeſt, but at the ſame time he begged that he would not deſtroy them if he could poſſibly avoid it. What the reſult was I never learned; but from the apparent ſatisfaction with which the Indian ſet out after he had obtained his dreadful permiſſion, there was every reaſon to imagine that one of the negroes at leaſt would be ſacrificed.

This indifference in the mind of the Indians about taking away the life of a fellow creature, makes them appear, it muſt be confeſſed, in a very unamiable point of view. I fear alſo, that in the opinion of many people, all the good qualities which they poſſeſs, would but ill atone for their revengeful diſpoſition, and for the cruelties which, it is well known, they ſometimes inflict upon the priſoners who have fallen into their power in battle. Great pains

have

have been taken, both by the French and Engliſh miſſionaries, to repreſent to them the infamy of torturing their priſoners; nor have theſe pains been beſtowed in vain; for though in ſome recent inſtances it has appeared that they ſtill retain a fondneſs for this horrid practice, yet I will venture, from what I have heard, to aſſert, that of late years not one priſoner has been put to the torture, where twenty would have been a hundred years ago. Of the priſoners that fell into their hands on St. Clair's defeat, I could not learn, although I made ſtrict enquiries on the ſubject, that a ſingle man had been faſtened to the ſtake. As ſoon as the defeat was known, rewards were held out by the Britiſh officers, and others that had influence over them, to bring in their priſoners alive, and the greater part of them were delivered up unhurt; but to irradicate wholly from their breaſts the ſpirit of revenge has been found impoſſible. You will be enabled to form a tolerable idea of the little good effect which education has over their minds in this reſpect, from the following anecdotes of Captain Joſeph Brandt, a war chief of the Mohawk nation.

This Brandt, at a very early age, was ſent to a college in New England, where, being poſſeſſed of a good capacity, he ſoon made very conſiderable progreſs in the Greek and

Latin languages. Uncommon pains were taken to inſtil into his mind the truths of the goſpel. He profeſſed himſelf to be a warm admirer of the principles of chriſtianity, and in hopes of being able to convert his nation on returning to them, he abſolutely tranſlated the goſpel of St. Matthew into the Mohawk language; he alſo tranſlated the eſtabliſhed form of prayer of the church of England. Before Brandt, however, had finiſhed his courſe of ſtudies, the American war broke out, and fired with that ſpirit of glory which ſeems to have been implanted by nature in the breaſt of the Indian, he immediately quitted the college, repaired to his native village, and ſhortly afterwards, with a conſiderable body of his nation, joined ſome Britiſh troops under the command of Sir John Johnſton. Here he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his valour in many different engagements, and was ſoon raiſed, not only to the rank of a war chief, but alſo to that of a captain in his Majeſty's ſervice.

It was not long, however, before Brandt ſullied his reputation in the Britiſh army. A ſkirmiſh took place with a body of American troops; the action was warm, and Brandt was ſhot by a muſquet-ball in the heel; but the Americans in the end were defeated, and an officer with about ſixty men taken priſoners. The officer, after having delivered up his ſword,

ſword, had entered into converſation with Colonel Johnſton, who commanded the Britiſh troops, and they were talking together in the moſt friendly manner, when Brandt, having ſtolen ſlily behind them, laid the American officer lifeleſs on the ground with a blow of his tomahawk. The indignation of Sir John Johnſton, as may readily be ſuppoſed, was rouſed by ſuch an act of treachery, and he reſented it in the warmeſt language. Brandt liſtened to him unconcernedly, and when he had finiſhed, told him, that he was ſorry what he had done had cauſed his diſpleaſure, but that indeed his heel was extremely painful at the moment, and he could not help revenging himſelf on the only chief of the party that he ſaw taken. Since he had killed the officer, his heel, he added, was much leſs painful to him than it had been before.

When the war broke out, the Mohawks reſided on the Mohawk River, in the ſtate of New York, but on peace being made, they emigrated into Upper Canada, and their principal village is now ſituated on the Grand River, which falls into Lake Erie on the north ſide, about ſixty miles from the town of Newark or Niagara; there Brandt at preſent reſides. He has built a comfortable habitation for himſelf, and any ſtranger that viſits him may reſt aſſured of being well received, and of finding

a plentiful table well ſerved every day. He has no leſs than thirty or forty negroes, who attend to his horſes, cultivate his grounds, &c. Theſe poor creatures are kept in the greateſt ſubjection, and they dare not attempt to make their eſcape, for he has aſſured them, that if they did ſo he would follow them himſelf, though it were to the confines of Georgia, and would tomahawk them wherever he met them. They know his diſpoſition too well not to think that he would adhere ſtrictly to his word.

Brandt receives from government half pay as a captain, beſides annual preſents, &c. which in all amount, it is ſaid, to £.500 per annum. We had no ſmall curioſity, as you may well imagine, to ſee this Brandt, and we procured letters of introduction to him from the governor's ſecretary, and from different officers and gentlemen of his acquaintance, with an intention of proceeding from Newark to his village. Moſt unluckily, however, on the day before that of our reaching the town of Newark or Niagara, he had embarked on board a veſſel for Kingſton, at the oppoſite end of the lake. You may judge of Brandt's conſequence, when I tell you, that a lawyer of Niagara, who croſſed Lake Ontario in the ſame veſſel with us, from Kingſton, where he had been detained for ſome time by contrary winds, informed us, the

the day after our arrival at Niagara, that by his not having reached that place in time to tranſact ſome law buſineſs for Brandt, and which had conſequently been given to another perſon, he ſhould be a loſer of one hundred pounds at leaſt.

Brandt's ſagacity led him, early in life, to diſcover that the Indians had been made the dupe of every foreign power that had got footing in America; and, indeed, could he have had any doubts on the ſubject, they would have been removed when he ſaw the Britiſh, after having demanded and received the aſſiſtance of the Indians in the American war, ſo ungenerouſly and unjuſtly yield up the whole of the Indian territories, eaſt of the Miſſiſſippi and ſouth of the lakes, to the people of the United States; to the very enemies, in ſhort, they had made to themſelves at the requeſt of the Britiſh. He perceived with regret that the Indians, by eſpouſing the quarrels of the whites, and by eſpouſing different intereſts, were weakening themſelves; whereas, if they remained aloof, and were guided by the one policy, they would ſoon become formidable, and be treated with more reſpect; he formed the bold ſcheme, therefore, of uniting the Indians together in one grand confederacy, and for this purpoſe ſent meſſengers to different chiefs, propoſing that a general meeting ſhould be held

held of the heads of every tribe, to take the ſubject into conſideration; but certain of the tribes, ſuſpicious of Brandt's deſigns, and fearful that he was bent upon acquiring power for himſelf by this meaſure, oppoſed it with all their might. Brandt has in conſequence become extremely obnoxious to many of the moſt warlike, and with ſuch a jealous eye do they now regard him, that it would not be perfectly ſafe for him to venture to the upper country.

He has managed the affairs of his own people with great ability, and leaſed out their ſuperfluous lands for them, for long terms of years, by which meaſure a certain annual revenue is enſured to the nation, probably as long as it will remain a nation. He wiſely judged, that it was much better to do ſo than to ſuffer the Mohawks, as many other tribes had done, to ſell their poſſeſſions by piecemeal, the ſums of money they received for which, however great, would ſoon be diſſipated if paid to them at once.

Whenever the affairs of his nation ſhall permit him to do ſo, Brandt declares it to be his intention to ſit down to the further ſtudy of the Greek language, of which he profeſſes himſelf to be a great admirer, and to tranſlate from the original, into the Mohawk language, more of the New Teſtament; yet this ſame man,

ſhortly

ſhortly before we arrived at Niagara, killed his only ſon with his own hand. The ſon, it ſeems, was a drunken good for nothing fellow, who had often avowed his intention of deſtroying his father. One evening he abſolutely entered the apartment of his father, and had begun to grapple with him, perhaps with a view to put his unnatural threats into execution, when Brandt drew a ſhort ſword, and felled him to the ground. Brandt ſpeaks of this affair with regret, but at the ſame time without any of that emotion which another perſon than an Indian might be ſuppoſed to feel. He conſoles himſelf for the act, by thinking that he has benefitted the nation, by ridding them of a raſcal.

Brandt wears his hair in the Indian ſtyle, and alſo the Indian dreſs; inſtead of the wrapper, or blanket, he wears a ſhort coat, ſuch as I have deſcribed, ſimilar to a hunting frock.

Though infinite pains have been taken by the French Roman Catholics, and other miſſionaries, to propagate the goſpel amongſt the Indians, and though many different tribes have been induced thereby to ſubmit to baptiſm, yet it does not appear, except in very few inſtances, that any material advantages have reſulted from the introduction of the Chriſtian religion amongſt them. They have learned to repeat certain forms of prayer; they have learned

learned to attend to certain outward ceremonies; but they ſtill continue to be ſwayed by the ſame violent paſſions as before, and have imbibed nothing of the genuine ſpirit of chriſtianity.

The Moravian miſſionaries have wrought a greater change in the minds of the Indians than any others, and have ſucceeded ſo far as to induce ſome of them to abandon their ſavage mode of life, to renounce war, and to cultivate the earth. It is with the Munſies, a ſmall tribe reſident on the eaſt ſide of Lake St. Clair, that they have had the moſt ſucceſs; but the number that have been ſo converted is ſmall indeed. The Roman Catholics have the moſt adherents, as the outward forms and parade of their religion are particularly calculated to ſtrike the attention of the Indians, and as but little reſtraint is laid on them by the miſſionaries of that perſuaſion, in conſequence of their profeſſion of the new faith. The Quakers, of all people, have had the leaſt ſucceſs amongſt them; the doctrine of non-reſiſtance, which they ſet out with preaching, but ill accords with the opinion of the Indian; and amongſt ſome tribes, where they have attempted to inculcate it, particularly amongſt the Shawneſe, one of the moſt warlike tribes to the north of the Ohio, they have

have been expoſed to very imminent danger *.

The Indians, who yet remain ignorant of divine revelation, ſeem almoſt univerſally to believe in the exiſtence of one ſupreme, beneficent, all wiſe, and all powerful ſpirit, and likewiſe in the exiſtence of ſubordinate ſpirits, both good and bad. The former, having the good of mankind at heart, they think it needleſs to pay homage to them, and it is only to the evil ones, of whom they have an innate dread, that they pay their devotions, in order to avert their ill intentions. Some diſtant tribes, it is ſaid, have prieſts amongſt them, but it does not appear that they have any regular

* The great difficulty of converting the Indians to chriſtianity does not ariſe from their attachment to their own religion, where they have any, ſo much as from certain habits which they ſeem to have imbibed with the very milk of their mothers.

A French miſſionary relates, that he was once endeavouring to convert an Indian, by deſcribing to him the rewards that would attend the good, and the dreadful puniſhment which muſt inevitably await the wicked, in a future world, when the Indian, who had ſome time before loſt his deareſt friend, ſuddenly interrupted him, by aſking him, whether he thought his departed friend was gone to heaven or to hell. I ſincerely truſt, anſwered the miſſionary, that he is in heaven. Then I will do as you bid me, added the Indian, and lead a ſober life, for I ſhould like to go to the place where my friend is. Had he, on the contrary, been told that his friend was in hell, all that the reverend father could have ſaid to him of fire and brimſtone would have been of little avail in perſuading him to have led any other than the moſt diſſolute life, in hopes of meeting with his friend to ſympathiſe with him under his ſufferings.

forms

forms of worſhip. Each individual repeats a prayer, or makes an offering to the evil ſpirit, when his fear and apprehenſions ſuggeſt the neceſſity of his ſo doing.

The belief of a future ſtate, in which they are to enjoy the ſame pleaſures as they do in this world, but to be exempted from pain, and from the trouble of procuring food, ſeems to be very general amongſt them. Some of the tribes have much leſs devotion than others; the Shawneſe, a warlike daring nation, have but very little fear of evil ſpirits, and conſequently have ſcarcely any religion amongſt them. None of this nation, that I could learn, have ever been converted to Chriſtianity.

It is a very ſingular and remarkable circumſtance, that notwithſtanding the ſtriking ſimilarity which we find in the perſons, manners, cuſtoms, diſpoſitions, and religion of the different tribes of Indians from one end of the continent of North America to the other, a ſimilarity ſo great as hardly to leave a doubt on the mind but that they muſt all have had the ſame origin, the languages of the different tribes ſhould yet be ſo materially different. No two tribes ſpeak exactly the ſame language; and the languages of many of thoſe, who live at no great diſtance aſunder, vary ſo much, that they cannot make themſelves at all underſtood to each other. I was informed

that

that the Chippeway language was by far the moſt general, and that a perſon intimately acquainted with it would ſoon be able to acquire a tolerable knowledge of any other language ſpoken between the Ohio and Lake Superior. Some perſons, who have made the Indian languages their ſtudy, aſſert, that all the different languages ſpoken by thoſe tribes, with which we have any connection, are but dialects of three primitive tongues, viz. the Huron, the Algonquin, and the Sioux; the two former of which, being well underſtood, will enable a perſon to converſe, at leaſt ſlightly, with the Indians of any tribe in Canada or the United States. All the nations that ſpeak a language derived from the Sioux, have, it is ſaid, a hiſſing pronunciation; thoſe who ſpeak one derived from the Huron, have a guttural pronunciation; and ſuch as ſpeak any one derived from the Algonquin, pronounce their words with greater ſoftneſs and eaſe than any of the others. Whether this be a juſt diſtinction or not I cannot pretend to determine; I ſhall only obſerve, that all the Indian men I ever met with, as well thoſe whoſe language is ſaid to be derived from the Huron, as thoſe whoſe language is derived from the Algonquin, appear to me to have very few labial ſounds in their language, and to pronounce the words from the throat, but not ſo much from the upper

upper as the lower part of the throat towards the breaſt. A ſlight degree of heſitation is obſervable in their ſpeech, and they articulate ſeemingly with difficulty, and in a manner ſomewhat ſimilar to what a perſon, I ſhould ſuppoſe, would be apt to do if he had a great weight laid on his cheſt, or had received a blow on his breaſt or back ſo violent as to affect his breath. The women, on the contrary, ſpeak with the utmoſt eaſe, and the language, as pronounced by them, appears as ſoft as the Italian. They have, without exception, the moſt delicate harmonious voiçes I ever heard, and the moſt pleaſing gentle laugh that it is poſſible to conceive. I have oftentimes ſat amongſt a group of them for an hour or two together, merely for the pleaſure of liſtening to their converſation, on account of its wonderful ſoftneſs and delicacy.

The Indians, both men and women, ſpeak with great deliberation, and never appear to be at a loſs for words to expreſs their ſentiments.

The native muſic of the Indians is very rude and indifferent, and equally devoid of melody and variety. Their famous war ſong is nothing better than an inſipid recitative. Singing and dancing with them go hand in hand; and when a large number of them, collected together, join in the one ſong, the few wild

wild notes of which it conſiſts, mingled with the ſound of their pipes and drums, ſometimes produce, when heard at a diſtance, a pleaſing effect on the ear; but it is then and then only that their muſic is tolerable.

The firſt night of our arrival at Malden, juſt as we were retiring to reſt, near midnight, we were moſt agreeably entertained in this manner with the ſound of their muſic on the iſland of Bois Blanc. Eager to hear more of it, and to be witneſs to their dancing, we procured a boat, and immediately croſſed the river to the ſpot where they were aſſembled. Three elderly men, ſeated under a tree, were the principal muſicians. One of theſe beat a ſmall drum, formed of a piece of a hollow tree covered with a ſkin, and the two others marked time equally with the drum, with rattles formed of dried ſquaſhes or gourds filled with peaſe. At the ſame time theſe men ſung, indeed they were the leaders of the ſong, which the dancers joined in. The dancers conſiſted ſolely of a party of ſquaws, to the number of twenty or thereabouts, who, ſtanding in a circle, with their faces inwards and their hands folded round each other's necks, moved, thus linked together, ſideways, with cloſe ſhort ſteps, round a ſmall fire. The men and women never dance together, unleſs indeed a pretty ſquaw be introduced by ſome young

fellow into one of the men's dances, which is conſidered as a very great mark of favour. This is of a piece with the general conduct of the Indians, who look upon the women in a totally different light from what we do in Europe, and condemn them as ſlaves to do all the drudgery. I have ſeen a young chief with no leſs than three women attendant on him to run after his arrows, when he was amuſing himſelf with ſhooting ſquirrels; I have alſo ſeen Indians, when moving for a few miles from one place to another, mount their horſes and canter away at their eaſe, whilſt their women were left not only to walk, but to carry very heavy loads on their backs after them.

After the women had danced for a time, a larger fire was kindled, and the men aſſembled from different parts of the iſland, to the number of fifty or ſixty, to amuſe themſelves in their turn. There was little more variety in their dancing than in that of the women. They firſt walked round the fire in a large circle, cloſely, one after another, marking time with ſhort ſteps to the muſic; the beſt dancer was put at their head, and gave the ſtep; he was alſo the principal ſinger in the circle. After having made one round, the ſtep was altered to a wider one, and they began to ſtamp with great vehemence upon the ground; and every third or fourth round,

making little leaps off the ground with both feet, they turned their faces to the fire and bowed their heads, at the ſame time going on ſideways. At laſt, having made a dozen or two rounds, towards the end of which each one of them had begun to ſtamp on the ground with inconceivable fury, but more particularly the principal dancer, they all gave a loud ſhout at once, and the dance ended.

In two or three minutes another dance was begun, which ended as ſoon, and nearly in the ſame way as the other. There was but little difference in the figures of any of them, and the only material difference in the ſongs was, that in ſome of them the dancers, inſtead of ſinging the whole of the air, came in ſimply with reſponſes to the airs ſung by the old men. They beckoned to us to join them in their dance, which we immediately did, as it was likely to pleaſe them, and we remained on the iſland with them till two or three o'clock in the morning. There is ſomething inconceivably terrible in the ſight of a number of Indians dancing thus round a fire in the depths of thick woods, and the loud ſhrieks at the end of every dance adds greatly to the horror which their firſt appearance inſpires.

Scarcely a night paſſed over but what there were dances, ſimilar to thoſe I have deſcribed, on the iſland. They never think of dancing

till the night is conſiderably advanced, and they keep it up till daybreak. In the day time they lie ſleeping in the ſun, or ſit ſmoking tobacco, that is, when they have nothing particular to engage them. Though the moſt diligent perſevering people in the world when rouſed into action, yet when at peace with their neighbours, and having got wherewith to ſatisfy the calls of hunger, they are the moſt ſlothful and indolent poſſible.

The dances mentioned are ſuch as the Indians amuſe themſelves with in common. On grand occaſions they have a variety of others much more intereſting to a ſpectator. The dances which you ſee in common amongſt the Shawneſe, and certain other tribes, are alſo, it is ſaid, much more entertaining than thoſe I have deſcribed. There were ſeveral families of the Shawneſe encamped on the iſland of Bois Blanc when we were there; but as there was not a ſufficient number to form a dance by themſelves, we were never gratified with a ſight of their performances.

Of their grand dances the war dance muſt undoubtedly, from every account I have received of it, for I never had any opportunity of ſeeing it myſelf, be the one moſt worthy the attention of a ſtranger. It is performed both on ſetting out and returning from their war parties, and likewiſe at other times, but never except

except on ſome very particular and ſolemn occaſion. The chiefs and warriors who are about to join in this dance dreſs and paint themſelves as if actually out on a warlike expedition, and they carry in their hands their warlike weapons. Being aſſembled, they ſeat themſelves down on their hams, in a circle, round a great fire, near to which is placed a large poſt; after remaining a ſhort time in this poſition, one of the principal chiefs riſes, and placing himſelf in the center, begins to rehearſe, in a ſort of recitative, all the gallant actions which he has ever performed; he dwells particularly on the number of enemies he has killed, and deſcribes the manner in which he ſcalped them, making geſtures all the time, and brandiſhing his weapons, as if actually engaged in performing the horrid operation. At the end of every remarkable ſtory he ſtrikes his war club on the poſt with great fury. Every chief and warrior tells of his deeds in turn. The ſong of one warrior often occupies ſeveral hours, and the dance itſelf ſometimes laſts for three or four entire days and nights. During this period no one is allowed to ſleep, a perſon who ſtands at the outſide of the circle being appointed (whoſe buſineſs it is) to rouſe any warrior that appears in the leaſt drowſy. A deer, a bear, or ſome other large animal is put to roaſt at the fire as ſoon as the dance begins,

and while it lasts each warrior rises at will to help himself to a piece of it. After each person in the circle has in turn told of his exploits, they all rise, and join in a dance truly terrifying; they throw themselves into a variety of postures, and leaping about in the most frantic manner, brandish their knives and other weapons; at the same time they set up the war hoop, and utter the most dreadful yells imaginable. In this manner the dance terminates.

The Indian flute or pipe is formed of a thick cane, similar to what is found on the banks of the Mississippi, and in the southern parts of the United States. It is about two feet or more in length, and has eight or nine holes in it, in one row. It is held in the same manner as the oboe or clarinet, and the sound is produced by means of a mouth piece not unlike that of a common whistle. The tones of the instrument are by no means unharmonious, and they would admit of a pleasing modulation, but I never met with an Indian that was able to play a regular air upon it, not even any one of the airs which they commonly sing, although I saw several that were extremely fond of amusing themselves with the instrument, and that would sit for hours together over the embers of their cabin fires, playing over a few wild melancholy notes. Every Indian that can bring a sound

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out of the inſtrument, and ſtop the holes, which any one may do, thinks himſelf maſter of it; and the notes which they commonly produce are as unconnected and unmeaning as thoſe which a child would bring forth from a halfpenny whiſtle.

In addition to what I have ſaid on the ſubject of the Indians, I ſhall only obſerve, that notwithſtanding they are ſuch a very friendly hoſpitable people, yet few perſons, who had ever taſted of the pleaſures and comforts of civilized life, would feel any inclination to reſide amongſt them, on becoming acquainted with their manner of living. The filthineſs and wretchedneſs of their ſmoky habitations, the nauſeouſneſs of their common food to a perſon not even of a delicate palate, and their general uncleanlineſs, would be ſufficient, I think, to deter any one from going to live amongſt them from choice, ſuppoſing even that no other reaſons operated againſt his doing ſo. For my own part, I had fully determined in my own mind, when I firſt came to America, not to leave the continent without ſpending a conſiderable time amongſt them, in the interior parts of the country, in order to have an opportunity of obſerving their native manners and cuſtoms in their utmoſt purity; but the ſamples I have ſeen of them during my ſtay in this part of the country, although it has given me a moſt fa-

vourable opinion of the Indians themſelves, has induced me to relinquiſh my purpoſe. Content therefore with what I have ſeen myſelf, and with what I have heard from others, if chance ſhould not bring me again into their way in proſecuting my journey into the ſettled parts of the States, I ſhall take no further pains to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance with them.

LETTER XXXVI.

Departure from Malden.—Storm on Lake Erie.—Driven back amongſt the Iſlands.—Shipwreck narrowly avoided.—Voyage acroſs the Lake.—Land at Fort Erie.—Proceed to Buffalo Creek.—Engage Indians to go through the Woods.—Set out on Foot.—Journey through the Woods.—Deſcription of the Country beyond Buffalo Creek.—Vaſt Plains.—Grand Appearance of the Trees here.—Indian Dogs.—Arrival at the Settlements on Geneſee River.—Firſt Settlers.—Their general Character.—Deſcription of the Country bordering on Geneſee River.—Fevers common in Autumn.—Proceed on Foot to Bath.

Bath, November.

TOWARDS the latter end of the month of October, the ſchooner in which we had engaged a paſſage to Preſqu' Iſle made her

her appearance before Malden, where ſhe was obliged to lay at anchor for three days, the wind not being favourable for going farther down the river; at the end of that time, however, it veered about, and we repaired on board, after having taken a long farewel of our friend Captain E——, whoſe kindneſs to us had been unbounded, and was doubly grateful, inaſmuch as it was totally unexpected by us young ſtrangers, who had not the ſlighteſt acquaintance with him previous to our coming into the country, and had not been introduced to him even by letter.

The wind, though favourable, was very light on the morning of our embarkation, but the current being ſtrong we were ſoon carried down to the lake. In the afternoon we paſſed the iſlands, which had the moſt beautiful appearance imaginable. The rich woods with which the ſhores were adorned, now tinged with the hues of autumn, afforded in their decline a ſtill more pleaſing variety to the eye than when they were clothed in their fulleſt verdure; and their gaudy colours, intermingled with the ſhadows of the rocks, were ſeen fancifully reflected in the unruffled ſurface of the ſurrounding lake. At day-break the next morning we found ourſelves entirely clear of the land; but inſtead of the azure ſky and gentle breezes which had favoured us the preceding

ceding day, we had thick hazy weather, and every appearance in the heavens indicated that before many hours were over we ſhould have to contend with ſome of thoſe dangerous ſtorms that are ſo frequent on Lake Erie. It was not long indeed ere the winds began to blow, and the waves to riſe in a tremendous manner, and we ſoon became ſpectators of a number of thoſe confuſed and diſguſting ſcenes which a gale of wind never fails to occaſion in a ſmall veſſel crowded with paſſengers. A number of old French ladies, who were going to ſee their grandchildren in Lower Canada, and who now for the firſt time in their lives found themſelves on the water, occupied the cabin. The hold of the veſſel, boarded from end to end, and divided ſimply by a ſail ſuſpended from one of the beams, was filled on one ſide with ſteerage paſſengers, amongſt which were ſeveral women and children; and on the oppoſite one with paſſengers who had paid cabin price, but were unable to get any better accommodation, amongſt which number was our party. Not including either the old ladies in the cabin, or the ſteerage paſſengers, we ſat down to dinner each day twenty-ſix in number, which circumſtance, when I inform you that the veſſel was only ſeventy tons burthen, will beſt enable you to conceive how much we muſt have been crowded. The

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greater part of the paſſengers, drooping under ſea-ſickneſs, begged for heaven's ſake that the captain would put back; but bent upon performing his voyage with expedition, which was a matter of the utmoſt conſequence indeed, now that the ſeaſon was ſo far advanced, and there was a poſſibility that he might be blocked up by the ice on his return, he was deaf to their entreaties. What the earneſt entreaties, however, of the paſſengers could not effect, the ſtorm ſoon compelled him to. It was found abſolutely neceſſary to ſeek for a place of ſhelter to avoid its fury; and accordingly the helm having been ordered up, we made the beſt of our way back again to the iſlands, in a bay between two of which we caſt anchor. This bay, ſituated between the Baſs Iſlands, which are among the largeſt in the cluſter, is called, from its being ſo frequently reſorted to by veſſels that meet with contrary winds in going down the lake, Put-in-Bay, vulgarly termed by the ſailors Pudding Bay.

Here we lay ſecurely ſheltered by the land until four o'clock the next morning, when the watch upon deck gave the alarm that the veſſel was driving from her anchor, and going faſt towards the ſhore. The captain ſtarted up, and perceiving that the wind had ſhifted, and the land no longer afforded any protection

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to the veſſel, he immediately gave orders to ſlip the cable, and hoiſt the jib, in order to wear the veſſel round, and thus get free, if poſſible, of the ſhore. In the hurry and confuſion of the moment, however, the mainſail was hoiſted at the ſame time with the jib, the veſſel was put aback, and nothing could have ſaved her from going at once on ſhore but the letting fall of another anchor inſtantaneouſly. I can only account for this unfortunate miſtake by ſuppoſing that the men were not ſufficiently rouſed from their ſlumbers, on coming upon deck, to hear diſtinctly the word of command. Only one man had been left to keep the watch, as it was thought that the veſſel was riding in perfect ſafety, and from the time that the alarm was firſt given until the anchor was dropped ſcarcely four minutes elapſed.

The dawn of day only enabled us to ſee all the danger of our ſituation. We were within one hundred yards of a rocky lee ſhore, and depending upon one anchor, which, if the gale increaſed, the captain feared very much would not hold. The day was wet and ſqually, and the appearance of the ſky gave us every reaſon to imagine that the weather, inſtead of growing moderate, would become ſtill more tempeſtuous than it either was or had been; nevertheleſs, buoyed up by hope, and by a good

good ſhare of animal ſpirits, we eat our breakfaſts regardleſs of the impending danger, and afterwards ſat down to a game of cards; but ſcarcely had we played for one hour when the diſmal cry was heard of, "All hands aloft," as the veſſel was again drifting towards the ſhore. The day being very cold, I had thrown a blanket over my ſhoulders, and had faſtened it round my waiſt with a girdle, in the Indian faſhion; but being incapable of managing it like an Indian, I ſtopped to diſencumber myſelf of it before I went on deck, ſo that, as it happened, I was the laſt man below. The readieſt way of going up was through the hatchway, and I had juſt got my foot upon the ladder, in order to aſcend, when the veſſel ſtruck with great force upon the rocks. The women ſhrieking now flocked round me, begging for God's ſake that I would ſtay by them; at the ſame time my companions urged me from above to come up with all poſſible ſpeed. To my lateſt hour I ſhall never forget the emotions which I felt at that moment; to have ſtaid below would have been uſeleſs; I endeavoured, therefore, to comfort the poor creatures that clung to me, and then diſengaging myſelf from them, forced my way upon deck, where I was no ſooner arrived than the hatches were inſtantly ſhut down upon the wretched females, whoſe ſhrieks reſound-

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ed through the veſſel, notwithſtanding all the buſtle of the ſeamen, and the tremendous roaring of the breakers amongſt the adjacent rocks.

Before two minutes had paſſed over, the veſſel ſtruck a ſecond time, but with a ſtill greater ſhock; and at the end of a quarter of an hour, during which period ſhe had gradually approached nearer towards the ſhore, ſhe began to ſtrike with the fall of every wave.

The general opinion now ſeemed to be in favour of cutting away the maſts, in order to lighten the veſſel; and the axes were actually upraiſed for that purpoſe, when one of my companions, who poſſeſſed a conſiderable ſhare of nautical knowledge from having been in the navy, oppoſed the meaſure. It appeared to him, that as the pumps were ſtill free, and as the veſſel had not yet made more water than could be eaſily got under, the cutting away of the maſts would only be to deprive ourſelves of the means of getting off the rock if the wind ſhould veer about; but he adviſed the captain to have the yards and topmaſts cut away. The maſts were ſpared, and his advice was in every other reſpect attended to. The wind unfortunately, however, ſtill continued to blow from the ſame point, and the only alteration obſervable in it was its blowing with ſtill greater force than ever.

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As the ſtorm increaſed, the waves began to roll with greater turbulence than before; and with ſuch impetuoſity did they break over the bows of the veſſel, that it was with the very utmoſt difficulty that I, and half a dozen more who had taken our ſtation on the forecaſtle, could hold by our hands faſt enough to ſave ourſelves from being carried overboard. For upwards of four hours did we remain in this ſituation, expecting every inſtant that the veſſel would go to pieces, and expoſed every three or four minutes to the ſhock of one of the tremendous breakers which came rolling towards us. Many of the billows appeared to be half as high as the foretop, and ſometimes, when they burſt over us, our breath was nearly taken away by the violence of the ſhock. At laſt, finding ourſelves ſo benumbed with cold that it would be impoſſible for us to make any exertions in the water to ſave ourſelves if the veſſel was wrecked, we determined to go below, there to remain until we ſhould be again forced up by the waves.

Some of the paſſengers now began to write their wills on ſcraps of paper, and to incloſe them in what they imagined would be moſt likely to preſerve them from the water; others had begun to take from their trunks what they deemed moſt valuable; and one unfortunate thoughtleſs man, who was moving with his family

family from the upper country, we discovered in the very act of loading himself with dollars from head to foot, so that had he fallen into the water in the state we found him, he must inevitably have been carried to the bottom.

Words can convey no idea of the wildness that reigned in the countenance of almost every person as the night approached; and many, terrified with the apprehensions of a nightly shipwreck, began to lament that the cable had not been at once cut, so as to have let the vessel go on shore whilst day-light remained: this indeed had been proposed a few hours after the vessel began to strike; but it was over-ruled by the captain, who very properly refused to adopt a measure tending to the immediate and certain destruction of his vessel, whilst a possibility remained that she might escape.

Till nine o'clock at night the vessel kept striking every minute, during which time we were kept in a state of the most dreadful suspence about our fate; but then happily the wind shifted one or two points in our favour, which occasioned the vessel to roll instead of striking. At midnight the gale grew somewhat more moderate; and at three in the morning it was so far abated, that the men were enabled to haul on the anchor, and in a short time to bring the vessel once more into deep

deep water, and out of all danger. Great was the joy, as may well be imagined, which this circumſtance diffuſed amongſt the paſſengers; and well pleaſed was each one, after the fatigue and anxiety of the preceding day, to think he might ſecurely lay himſelf down to reſt.

The next morning the ſun aroſe in all his majeſty from behind one of the diſtant iſlands. The azure ſky was unobſcured by a ſingle cloud, the air felt ſerenely mild, and the birds, as if equally delighted with man that the ſtorm was over, ſweetly warbled forth their ſongs in the adjacent woods; in ſhort, had it not been for the diſordered condition in which we ſaw our veſſel, and every thing belonging to us, the perils we had gone through would have appeared like a dream.

The firſt object of examination was the rudder. The tiller was broken to atoms; and the ſailors who went over the ſtern reported, that of the four gudgeons or hooks on which the rudder was ſuſpended, only one was left entire, and that one was much bent. On being unſhipped, the bottom of it was found to be ſo much ſhivered that it actually reſembled the end of a broom. The keel, there was every reaſon to ſuppoſe, was in the ſame ſhattered condition; nevertheleſs the veſſel, to the great aſtoniſhment of every perſon on board, did not

make much water. Had ſhe been half as crazy as the King's veſſel in which we went up the lake, nothing could have ſaved her from deſtruction.

A conſultation was now held upon what was beſt to be done. To proceed on the voyage appeared totally out of the queſtion; and it only remained to determine which way was the eaſieſt and readieſt to get back to Malden. All was at a ſtand, when an officer in the American ſervice propoſed the beating out of an iron crow bar, and the manufacturing of new gudgeons. This was thought to be impracticable; but neceſſity, the mother of invention, having ſet all our heads to work, an anvil was formed of a number of axes laid upon a block of wood; a large fire was kindled, and a party of us acting as ſmiths in turns, by the end of three hours contrived to hammer out one very reſpectable gudgeon.

In the mean time others of the paſſengers were employed in making a new tiller, and others undertook to fiſh for the cable and anchor that had been ſlipped, whilſt the ſailors were kept buſily employed at the rigging. By nightfall the veſſel was ſo far refitted that no apprehenſions were any longer entertained about our being able to reach Malden in ſafety, and ſome began to think there would be no danger in proſecuting the voyage down the

lake. The captain ſaid that his conduct muſt be regulated entirely by the appearance of the weather on the following day.

Early the next morning, whilſt we yet remained ſtretched in our births, our party was much ſurpriſed at hearing the ſound of ſtrange voices upon deck; but our ſurpriſe was ſtill greater, when on a nearer approach we recognized them to be the voices of two young friends of ours, who, like ourſelves, had croſſed the Atlantic to make a tour of the continent of North America, and whom, but a few days before we had quitted Philadelphia, we had accompanied ſome miles from that city on their way towards the ſouth. They had travelled, it ſeemed, from Philadelphia to Virginia, afterwards to Kentucky, and had found their way from the Ohio to Detroit on horſeback, after encountering numberleſs inconveniences. There they had engaged a paſſage in a little ſloop bound to Fort Erie, the laſt veſſel which was to quit that port during the preſent ſeaſon. They had embarked the preceding day, and in the night had run in to Put-in-Bay, as the wind was not favourable for going down the lake. The commander of the ſloop offered to ſtay by our veſſel, and to give her every aſſiſtance in his power, if our captain choſe to proceed down the lake with him. The offer was gladly accepted, and it

was agreed that the two veſſels ſhould ſail together as ſoon as the wind was favourable.

After having breakfaſted, we proceeded with our young friends, in the ſhip's boat, to that part of the iſland off which we had been expoſed to ſo much danger. Here we found the ſhore ſtrewed with the oars, ſpars, &c. which had been waſhed overboard, and from the dreadful manner in which they were ſhattered, no doubt remained on our minds, but that if the veſſel had been wrecked, two thirds of the paſſengers at leaſt muſt have periſhed amidſt the rocks and breakers. We ſpent the day rambling about the woods, and recounting to each other our adventures ſince the laſt ſeparation, and in the evening returned to our reſpective ſhips. About midnight the wind became fair, and whilſt we lay wrapt in ſleep the veſſels put to ſea.

All hopes of being able to get on ſhore at Preſqu' Iſle were now over, for the captain, as our veſſel was in ſuch a tickliſh condition, was fearful of venturing in there, leſt he might loſe ſight of the ſloop; we made up our minds, therefore, for being carried once more to our old quarters, Fort Erie; and after a moſt diſagreeable paſſage of four days, during which we encountered ſeveral ſqualls not a little alarming, landed there in ſafety.

Our friends immediately ſet out for Newark, from

from whence, if the ſeaſon would admit of it, and a favourable opportunity offered, they propoſed to ſail to Kingſton, and proceed afterwards to Lower Canada; we, on the contrary, deſirous of returning by a different route from that by which we had come up the country, croſſed over to Buffalo Creek, in hopes of being able to procure horſes at the Indian village there, to carry us through the Geneſee country. To our diſappointment we found, that all the Indians of the village who had horſes had already ſet out with them on their hunting expedition; but the interpreters told us, that if we would conſent to walk through the woods, as far as the ſettlements of the white people, the neareſt of which was ninety miles from Buffalo Creek, he did not doubt but that he could find Indians in the village who would undertake to carry our baggage for us; and that once arrived at the back ſettlements, we ſhould find it no difficult matter to hire horſes. We readily agreed to his propoſals, and he in conſequence ſoon picked out from the Indians five men, amongſt which was a war chief, on whom he told us we might place every reliance, as he was a man of an excellent character. The Indians, it was ſettled, were to have five dollars apiece for their ſervices, and we were to furniſh them with proviſions and liquor. The interpreter, who was a white man, put us on

our guard againſt giving them too much of the latter; but he adviſed us always to give them ſome whenever we took any ourſelves, and adviſed us alſo to eat with them, and to behave towards them in every reſpect as if they were our equals. We had already ſeen enough of the Indians, to know that this advice was good, and indeed to have adopted of ourſelves the line of conduct which he recommended, even if he had ſaid nothing on the ſubject.

Having arranged every thing to our ſatisfaction, we returned to Fort Erie; there we diſpoſed of all our ſuperfluous baggage, and having made ſome addition to the ſtores of dried proviſions and biſcuits which our kind friend Captain E—— had furniſhed us with on leaving his hoſpitable roof, we embarked, with all belonging to us, in the ſhip's boat, for the village on Buffalo Creek, where we had ſettled to paſs the night, in order to be ready to ſtart early the next morning.

The Indians were with us according to appointment at day break; they divided the baggage, faſtened their loads each on their carrying frames, and appeared perfectly ready to depart, when their chief requeſted, through the interpreter, "that we would give them before "they ſet out a little of that precious water "we poſſeſſed, to waſh their eyes with, which "would diſpel the miſts of ſleep that ſtill hung

"over

" over them, and thus enable them to find out " with certainty the intricate path through " the thick foreſt we were about to traverſe;" in other words, that we would give them ſome brandy. It is always in figurative language of this kind that the Indians aſk for ſpirits. We diſpenſed a glaſs full of the precious liquor, according to their deſire, to each of them, as well as to their ſquaws and children, whom they brought along with them to ſhare our bounty, and then, the Indians having taken up their loads, we penetrated into the woods, along a narrow path ſcarcely diſcernible, owing to the quantities of withered leaves with which it was ſtrewed.

After proceeding a few miles, we ſtopped by the ſide of a little ſtream of clear water to breakfaſt; on the banks of another ſtream we eat our dinner; and at a third we ſtopped for the night. Having laid down their loads, the Indians immediately began to erect poles, and cover them with pieces of bark, which they found lying on the ground, and which had evidently been left there by ſome travellers who had taken up their quarters for the night at this ſame place ſome time before; but we put a ſtop to their work, by ſhaking out from the bag in which it was depoſited, our travelling tent. They perceived now that they muſt employ themſelves in a different manner, and

knowing perfectly well what was to be done, they at once ſet to work with their tomahawks in cutting poles and pegs. In leſs than five minutes, as we all bore a part, the poles and pegs were cut, and the tent pitched.

One of the Indians now made ſigns to us to lend him a bag, having received which he ran into the woods, and was ſoon out of ſight. We were at a loſs to gueſs what he was in purſuit of; but in a little time he returned with the bag full of the fineſt cranberries I ever beheld. In the mean time another of them, of his own accord, buſied himſelf in carrying heaps of dried leaves into the tent, which, with our buffalo ſkins, afforded luxurious beds to men like us, that had ſlept on nothing better than a board for upwards of a month paſt. In the upper country it is ſo cuſtomary for travellers to carry their own bedding, that even at our friend Captain E——'s houſe we had no other accommodation at night than the floor of an empty room, on which we ſpread our ſkins. As for themſelves, the Indians thought of no covering whatſoever, but ſimply ſtretched themſelves on the ground beſide the fire, where they lay like dogs or cats till morning. At day-break we ſtarted, and ſtopped as on the preceding day beſide ſtreams of water to eat our breakfaſts and dinners.

From Buffalo Creek to the place where we encamped

encamped on the firſt night, diſtant about twenty-five miles, the country being very flat, and the trees growing ſo cloſely together that it was impoſſible to ſee farther forward in any direction than fifty yards, our journey after a ſhort time became very unintereſting. Nothing in its kind, however, could exceed the beauty of the ſcenery that we met with during our ſecond day's journey. We found the country, as we paſſed along, interſperſed with open plains of great magnitude, ſome of them not leſs, I ſhould ſuppoſe, than fifteen or twenty miles in circumference. The trees on the borders of theſe having ample room to ſpread, were luxuriant beyond deſcription, and ſhot forth their branches with all the grandeur and variety which characterizes the Engliſh timber, particularly the oak. The woods round the plains were indented in every direction with bays and promontories, as Mr. Gilpin terms it, whilſt rich clumps of trees, interſperſed here and there, appeared like ſo many cluſters of beautiful iſlands. The varied hues of the woods at this ſeaſon of the year, in America, can hardly be imagined by thoſe who never have had an opportunity of obſerving them; and indeed, as others have often remarked before, were a painter to attempt to colour a picture from them, it would be condemned in Europe as totally different from any thing that ever exiſted in nature.

Theſe

Theſe plains are covered with long coarſe graſs, which, at a future day, will probably afford feeding to numerous herds of cattle; at preſent they are totally unfrequented. Throughout the north-weſtern territory of the States, and even beyond the head waters of the Miſſiſſippi, the country is interſperſed with ſimilar plains; and the farther you proceed to the weſtward, the more extenſive in general are they. Amidſt thoſe to the weſtward are found numerous herds of buffaloes, elks, and other wild graminivorous animals; and formerly animals of the ſame deſcription were found on theſe plains in the ſtate of New York, but they have all diſappeared long ſince, owing to their having been ſo conſtantly purſued both by the Indians and white people.

Very different opinions have been entertained reſpecting the deficiency of trees on theſe extended tracts of land, in the midſt of a country that abounds ſo generally with wood. Some have attributed it to the poverty of the ſoil; whilſt others have maintained, that the plains were formerly covered with trees, as well as other parts of the country, but that the trees have either been deſtroyed by fire, or by buffaloes, beavers, and other animals.

It is well known that buffaloes, in all thoſe parts of the country where they are found wild, commit great depredations amongſt the trees, by

by gnawing off the bark; they are alſo very fond of feeding upon the young trees that ſpring up from ſeed, as well as upon the ſuckers of the old ones; it may readily be imagined, therefore, that the entire of the trees, on very extended tracts of land, might be thus killed by them; and as the American timber, when left expoſed to the weather, ſoon decays, at the end of a few years no veſtige of the woods would be found on theſe tracts, any more than if they had been conſumed by fire.

It appears to me, however, that there is more weight in the opinion of thoſe, who aſcribe the deficiency of trees on the plains to the unfriendlineſs of the ſoil; for the earth towards the ſurface is univerſally very light, and of a deep black colour, and on digging but a few inches downwards you come to a cold ſtiff clay. On Long Iſland, in the ſtate of New York, plains are met with nearly ſimilar to theſe in the back country, and the Dutch farmers, who have made repeated trials of the ſoil, find that it will not produce wheat or any other grain, and, in ſhort, nothing that is at all profitable except coarſe graſs. I make no doubt but that whenever a ſimilar trial comes to be made of the ſoil of the plains to the weſtward, it will be found equally incapable of producing any thing but what it does at preſent.

After

After having paſſed over a great number of theſe plains of different ſizes, we entered once more into the thick woods; but the country here appeared much more diverſified with riſing grounds than it was in any part we had already traverſed. As we were aſcending to the top of a ſmall eminence in the thickeſt part of theſe woods, towards the cloſe of our ſecond day's journey, our Indian chief, *China-breaſt-plate*, who received that name in conſequence of his having worn in the American war a thick china diſh as an ornament on his breaſt, made a ſign to us to follow him to the left of the path. We did ſo, and having proceeded for a few yards, ſuddenly found ourſelves on the margin of a deep extenſive pit, not unlike an exhauſted quarry, that had lain neglected for many years. The area of it contained about two acres, and it approached to a circular form; the ſides were extremely ſteep, and ſeemed in no place to be leſs than forty feet high; in ſome parts they were conſiderably higher. Near the center of the place was a large pond, and round the edges of it, as well as round the bottom of the precipice, grew ſeveral very lofty pines. The walls of the precipice conſiſted of a whitiſh ſubſtance not unlike lime-ſtone half calcined, and round the margin of the pit, at top, lay ſeveral heaps of looſe matter reſembling lime-rubbiſh.

China-

China-breaſt-plate, ſtanding on the brink of the precipice, began to tell us a long ſtory, and pointing to a diſtant place beyond it, frequently mentioned the word Niagara. Whether, however, the ſtory related to the pit, or whether it related to the Falls of Niagara, the ſmoke ariſing from which it is by no means improbable might be ſeen, at times, from the elevated ſpot where we ſtood, or whether the ſtory related to both, we could in no way learn, as we were totally unacquainted with the Seneka language, and he was nearly equally ignorant of the Engliſh. I never met with any perſon afterwards who had ſeen this place, or who knew any thing relating to it. Though we made repeated ſigns to *China-breaſt-plate* that we did not underſtand his ſtory, he ſtill went on with it for near a quarter of an hour; the other Indians liſtened to it with great attention, and ſeemed to take no ſmall intereſt in what he ſaid.

I ſhould have mentioned to you before, that both the Indians and the white Americans pronounce the word Niagara differently from what we do. The former lay the accent on the ſecond ſyllable, and pronounce the word full and broad as if written Nee-awg-ara. The Americans likewiſe lay the accent on the ſecond ſyllable; but pronounce it ſhort, and give the ſame ſound to the letters I and A as

we

we do. Niagara, in the language of the neighbouring Indians, ſignifies a mighty ruſhing or fall of water.

On the ſecond evening of our expedition we encamped on a ſmall hill, from whoſe top there was a moſt pleaſing romantic view, along a ſtream of conſiderable ſize which wound round its baſe, and as far as our eyes could reach, appeared tumbling in ſmall falls over ledges of rocks. A fire being kindled, and the tent pitched as uſual, the Indians ſat down to cook ſome ſquirrels which we had killed on the borders of the plains. Theſe animals the Indians had obſerved, as we came along, on the top of a large hollow tree; they immediately laid down their loads, and each taking out his tomahawk, and ſetting to work at a different part of the tree, it was felled down in leſs than five minutes, and ſuch of the ſquirrels as eſcaped their dogs we readily ſhot for them.

The Indian dogs, in general, have ſhort legs, long backs, large pricked up ears, and long curly tails; they differ from the common Engliſh cur dogs in no reſpect ſo much as in their barking but very ſeldom. They are extremely ſagacious, and ſeem to underſtand even what their maſters ſay to them in a low voice, without making any ſigns, either with the hand or head.

Whilſt

Whilſt the ſquirrels were roaſting on a forked ſtick ſtuck in the ground, and bent over the fire, one of the Indians went into the woods, and brought out ſeveral ſmall boughs of a tree, apparently of the willow tribe. Having carefully ſcraped the bark off from theſe, he made a ſort of frame with the twigs, in ſhape ſomewhat like a gridiron, and heaping upon it the ſcraped bark, placed it over the fire to dry. When it was tolerably criſp he rubbed it between his hands, and put it up in his pouch for the purpoſe of ſmoking.

The Indians ſmoke the bark of many different trees, and a great variety of herbs and leaves beſides tobacco. The moſt agreeable of any of the ſubſtances which they ſmoke are the leaves of the ſumach tree, rhus-toxicodendron. This is a graceful ſhrub, which bears leaves ſomewhat ſimilar to thoſe of the aſh. Towards the latter end of autumn they turn of a bright red colour, and when wanted for ſmoking are plucked off and dried in the ſun. Whilſt burning they afford a very agreeable perfume. Theſe leaves are very commonly ſmoked, mixed with tobacco, by the white people of the country; the ſmoke of them by themſelves alone, is ſaid to be prejudicial to the lungs. The ſumach tree bears tufted bunches of crimſon flowers. One of theſe bunches dipped lightly, for a few times, into a bowl of punch,

punch, gives the liquor a very agreeable acid, and in the ſouthern ſtates it is common to uſe them for that purpoſe, but it is a dangerous cuſtom, as the acid, though extremely agreeable to the palate, is of a poiſonous quality, and never fails to produce a moſt alarming effect on the bowels if uſed too freely.

A ſharp froſt ſet in this night, and on the following morning, at day-break, we recommenced our journey with croſſing the river already mentioned up to our waiſts in water, no very pleaſing taſk. Both on this and the ſubſequent day we had to wade through ſeveral other conſiderable ſtreams.

A few ſquirrels were the only wild animals which we met with in our journey through the woods, and the moſt ſolemn ſilence imaginable reigned throughout, except where a woodpecker was heard now and then tapping with its bill againſt a hollow tree. The birds in general flock towards the ſettlements, and it is a very rare circumſtance to meet with them in the depth of the foreſt.

The third evening we encamped as uſual. No ſooner had we come to our reſting place, than the Indians threw off their clothes, and rolled themſelves on the graſs juſt as horſes would do, to refreſh themſelves, the day having proved very hot, notwithſtanding the froſt the preceding night. We were joined this evening,

evening by another party of the Seneka Indians, who were going to a village ſituated on the Geneſee River, and in the morning we all ſet out together. Early in the day we came to ſeveral plains ſimilar to thoſe we had before met with, but not ſo extended, on the borders of one of which we ſaw, for the firſt time, a bark hut apparently inhabited. On going up to it, our ſurpriſe was not a little to find two men, whoſe appearance and manners at once beſpoke them not to be Americans. After ſome converſation we diſcovered them to be two Engliſhmen, who had formerly lived in London as *valets de chambre*, and having ſcraped together a little money, had ſet out for New York, where they expected at once to become great men; however they ſoon found to their coſt, that the expence of living in that city was not ſuited to their pockets, and they determined to go and ſettle in the back country. They were at no loſs to find perſons who had land to diſpoſe of, and happening to fall in with a jobber who owned ſome of theſe plains, and who painted to them in lively colours the advantage they would derive from ſettling on good land already cleared to their hand, they immediately purchaſed a conſiderable track of this barren ground at a round price, and ſet out to fix themſelves upon it. From the neighbouring ſettlements, which

were about ten miles off, they procured the assistance of two men, who after having built for them the bark hut in which we found them left them with a promise of returning in a short time to erect a log house. They had not, however, been punctual to their word, and unable to wield an axe, or to do any one thing for themselves, these unfortunate wretches sat moping in their hut, supporting themselves on some salt provisions they had brought with them, but which were now nearly exhausted. The people in the settlements, whom, on arriving there, we asked some few questions respecting these poor creatures, turned them into the greatest ridicule imaginable for being so helpless; and indeed they did present a most striking picture of the folly of any man's attempting to settle in America without being well acquainted with the country previously, and competent to do every sort of country work for himself.

It was not without very great vexation that we perceived, shortly after leaving this hut, evident symptoms of drunkenness in one of the Indians, and on examining our brandy cask it was but too plain that it had been pillaged. During the preceding part of our journey we had kept a watchful eye upon it, but drawing towards the end of our expedition, and having had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct

duct of the Indians, we had not paid ſufficient attention to it this day; and though it could not have been much more than five minutes out of our ſight, yet in that ſhort ſpace of time the ſcrew had been forced, and the caſk drained to the laſt drop. The Indian, whom we diſcovered to be drunk, was advanced a little before the others. He went on for ſome time ſtaggering about from ſide to ſide, but at laſt, ſtopping and laying hold of his ſcalping knife, which they always carry with them by their ſides, he began to brandiſh it with a threatening air. There is but one line of conduct to be purſued when you have to deal with Indians in ſuch a ſituation, and that is, to act with the moſt determined reſolution. If you betray the ſmalleſt ſymptoms of fear, or appear at all wavering in your conduct, it only ſerves to render them more ungovernable and furious. I accordingly took him by the ſhoulder, puſhed him forward, and preſenting my piece, gave him to underſtand that I would ſhoot him if he did not behave himſelf properly. My companions, whilſt I was taking care of him, went back to ſee in what ſtate the other Indians were. Luckily the liquor, though there was reaſon to apprehend they had all had a ſhare of it, had not made the ſame impreſſion upon them. One of them, indeed, was beginning to be refractory, and abſolutely threw

down his load, and refuſed to go farther; but a few words from *China-breaſt-plate* induced him to reſume it, and to go on. On coming up to the firſt Indian, and ſeeing the ſad ſtate he was in, they ſhook their heads, and crying, "No good Indian," "No good Indian," endeavoured by ſigns to inform us that it was he who had pillaged the caſk, and drank all the brandy; but as it was another Indian who carried the caſk, no doubt remained but that they muſt all have had a ſhare of the plunder; that the firſt fellow, however, had drank more than the reſt was apparent; for in a few minutes he dropped down ſpeechleſs under his load; the others haſtened to take it off from his back, and having divided it amongſt themſelves, they drew him aſide from the path, and threw him under ſome buſhes, where he was left to ſleep till he ſhould come again to his ſenſes.

About noon we reached the Geneſee River, at the oppoſite ſide of which was ſituated the village where we expected to procure horſes. We croſſed the river in canoes, and took up our quarters at a houſe at the uppermoſt end of the village, where we were very glad to find our Indian friends could get no accommodation, for we knew well that the firſt uſe they would make of the money we were going to give them would be to buy liquor, and intoxicate

intoxicate themſelves, in which ſtate they would not fail of becoming very troubleſome companions; it was ſcarcely dark indeed when news was brought us from a houſe near the river, that they went to after we had diſcharged them, that they were grown quite outrageous with the quantity of ſpirits they had drank, and were fighting and cutting each other in a moſt dreadful manner. They never reſent the injuries they receive from any perſon that is evidently intoxicated, but attribute their wounds entirely to the liquor, on which they vent their execrations for all the miſchief it has committed.

Before I diſmiſs the ſubject entirely, I muſt obſerve to you, that the Indians did not ſeem to think the carrying of our baggage was in any manner degrading to them; and after having received their due, they ſhook hands with us, and parted from us, not as from employers who had hired them, but as from friends whom they had been aſſiſting, and were now ſorry to leave.

The village where we ſtopped conſiſted of about eight or nine ſtraggling houſes; the beſt built one among them was that in which we lodged. It belonged to a family from New England, who about ſix years before had penetrated to this ſpot, then covered with woods, and one hundred and fifty miles diſtant

from any other ſettlement. Settlements are now ſcattered over the whole of the country which they had to paſs through in coming to it. The houſe was commodious and well built, and the people decent, civil, and reputable. It is a very rare circumſtance to meet with ſuch people amongſt the firſt ſettlers on the frontiers; in general they are men of a moroſe and ſavage diſpoſition, and the very outcaſts of ſociety, who bury themſelves in the woods, as if deſirous to ſhun the face of their fellow creatures; there they build a rude habitation, and clear perhaps three or four acres of land, juſt as much as they find ſufficient to provide their families with corn: for the greater part of their food they depend on their rifle guns. Theſe people, as the ſettlements advance, are ſucceeded in general by a ſecond ſet of men, leſs ſavage than the firſt, who clear more land, and do not depend ſo much upon hunting as upon agriculture for their ſubſiſtance. A third ſet ſucceed theſe in turn, who build good houſes, and bring the land into a more improved ſtate. The firſt ſettlers, as ſoon as they have diſpoſed of their miſerable dwellings to advantage, immediately penetrate farther back into the woods, in order to gain a place of abode ſuited to their rude mode of life. Theſe are the lawleſs people who encroach, as I have before mentioned, on the

Indian

Indian territory, and are the occaſion of the bitter animoſities between the whites and the Indians. The ſecond ſettlers, likewiſe, when diſplaced, ſeek for ſimilar places to what thoſe that they have left were when they firſt took them. I found, as I proceeded through this part of the country, that there was ſcarcely a man who had not changed his place of abode ſeven or eight different times.

As none but very miſerable horſes were to be procured at this village on the Geneſee River, and as our expedition through the woods had given us a reliſh for walking, we determined to proceed on foot, and merely to hire horſes to carry our baggage; accordingly, having engaged a pair, and a boy to conduct them, we ſet off early on the ſecond morning from that of our arrival at the village, for the town of Bath.

The country between theſe two places is moſt agreeably diverſified with hill and dale, and as the traveller paſſes over the hills which overlook the Geneſee River and the flats bordering upon it, he is entertained with a variety of noble and pictureſque views. We were particularly ſtruck with the proſpect from a large, and indeed very handſome houſe in its kind, belonging to a Major Wadſworth, built on one of theſe hills. The Geneſee River, bordered with the richeſt woods imaginable,

might be ſeen from it for many miles, meandering through a fertile country; and beyond the flats, on each ſide of the river, appeared ſeveral ranges of blue hills riſing up one behind another in a moſt fanciful manner, the whole together forming a moſt beautiful landſcape. Here, however, in the true American taſte, the greateſt pains were taking to diminiſh, and, indeed, to ſhut out all the beauties of the proſpect; every tree in the neighbourhood of the houſe was felled to the ground; inſtead of a neat lawn, for which the ground ſeemed to be ſingularly well diſpoſed, a wheat field was laid down in front of it; and at the bottom of the ſlope, at the diſtance of two hundred yards from the houſe, a town was building by the major, which, when completed, would effectually ſcreen from the dwelling houſe every ſight of the river and mountains. The Americans, as I before obſerved, ſeem to be totally dead to the beauties of nature, and only to admire a ſpot of ground as it appears to be more or leſs calculated to enrich the occupier by its produce.

The Geneſee River takes its name from a lofty hill in the Indian territory, near to which it paſſes, called by the Indians Geneſee, a word ſignifying, in their language, a grand extenſive proſpect.

The

The flats bordering upon the Geneſee River are amongſt the richeſt lands that are to be met with in North America, to the eaſt of the Ohio. Wheat, as I told you in a former letter, will not grow upon them; and it is not found that the ſoil is impoveriſhed by the ſucceſſive crops of Indian corn and hemp that are raiſed upon them year after year. The great fertility of theſe flats is to be aſcribed to the regular annual overflowing of the Geneſee River, whoſe waters are extremely muddy, and leave no ſmall quantity of ſlime behind them before they return to their natural channel. That river empties itſelf into Lake Ontario: it is ſomewhat more than one hundred miles in length, but only navigable for the laſt forty miles of its courſe, except at the time of the inundations; and even then the navigation is not uninterrupted the whole way down to the lake, there being three conſiderable falls in the river about ten miles above its mouth: the greateſt of theſe falls is ſaid to be ninety feet in perpendicular height. The high lands in the neighbourhood of the Geneſee River are ſtony, and are not diſtinguiſhed for their fertility, but the valleys are all extremely fruitful, and abound with rich timber.

The ſummers in this part of the country are by no means ſo hot as towards the Atlantic, and the winters are moderate; it is ſeldom, indeed,

indeed, that the ſnow lies on the ground much longer than ſix or ſeven weeks; but notwithſtanding this circumſtance, and that the face of the country is ſo much diverſified with riſing grounds, yet the whole of it is dreadfully unhealthy; ſcarcely a family eſcapes the baneful effects of the fevers that rage here during the autumn ſeaſon. I was informed by the inhabitants, that much fewer perſons had been attacked by the fever the laſt ſeaſon than during former years, and of theſe few a very ſmall number died, the fever having proved much leſs malignant than it was ever known to be before. This circumſtance led the inhabitants to hope, that as the country became more cleared it would become much more healthy. It is well known, indeed, that many parts of the country, which were extremely healthy while they remained covered with wood, and which alſo proved healthy after they had been generally cleared and ſettled, were very much otherwiſe when the trees were firſt cut down: this has been imputed to the vapours ariſing from the newly cleared lands on their being firſt expoſed to the burning rays of the ſun, and which, whilſt the newly cleared ſpots remain ſurrounded by woods, there is not a ſufficient circulation of air to diſpel. The unhealthineſs of the country at preſent does not deter numbers of people from coming to ſettle here

every year, and few parts of North America can boaſt of a more rapid improvement than the Geneſee country during the laſt four years.

In our way to Bath we paſſed through ſeveral ſmall towns that had been lately begun, and in theſe the houſes were comfortable and neatly built; but the greater part of thoſe of the farmers were wretched indeed; one at which we ſtopped for the night, in the courſe of our journey, had not even a chimney or window to it; a large hole at the end of the roof ſupplied the deficiency of both; the door was of ſuch a nature, alſo, as to make up in ſome meaſure for the want of a window, as it admitted light on all ſides. A heavy fall of ſnow happened to take place whilſt we were at this houſe, and as we lay ſtretched on our ſkins beſide the fire, at night, the ſnow was blown, in no ſmall quantities, through the crevices of the door, under our very ears.

At ſome of theſe houſes we got plenty of veniſon, and good butter, milk, and bread; but at others we could get nothing whatſoever to eat. At one little village, conſiſting of three or four houſes, the people told us, that they had not even ſufficient bread and milk for themſelves; and, indeed, the ſcantineſs of the meal to which we ſaw them ſitting down confirmed the truth of what they ſaid. We were under the neceſſity of walking on for nine miles

miles beyond this village before we could get any thing to satisfy our appetites.

The fall of snow, which I have mentioned, interrupted our progress through the woods very considerably the subsequent morning; it all disappeared, however, before the next night, and in the course of the third day from that on which we left the banks of the Genesee River we reached the place of our destination.

LETTER XXXVII.

Account of Bath.—Of the Neighbourhood.—Singular Method taken to improve it.—Speculators.—Description of one, in a Letter from an American Farmer.—Conhorton Creek.—View of the Navigation from Bath downwards.—Leave Bath for Newtown.—Embark in Canoes.—Stranded in the Night.—Seek for Shelter in a neighbouring House.—Difficulty of procuring Provisions.—Resume our Voyage.—Lochartsburgh.—Description of the eastern Branch of the Susquehannah River.—French Town.—French and Americans ill suited to each other.—Wilkesbarré.—Mountains in the Neighbourhood.—Country thinly settled towards Philadelphia.—Description

ſcription of the Wind-Gap in the Blue Mountains.—Summary Account of the Moravian Settlement at Bethlehem.—Return to Philadelphia.

Philadelphia, November.

BATH is a poſt town, and the principal town in the weſtern parts of the ſtate of New York. Though laid out only three years ago, yet it already contains about thirty houſes, and is increaſing very faſt. Amongſt the houſes are ſeveral ſtores or ſhops well furniſhed with goods, and a tavern that would not be thought meanly of in any part of America. This town was founded by a gentleman who formerly bore the rank of captain in his Majeſty's ſervice; he has likewiſe been the founder of Williamſburgh and Falkner's Town; and indeed to his exertions, joined to thoſe of a few other individuals, may be aſcribed the improvement of the whole of this part of the country, beſt known in America by the name of the Geneſee Country, or the County of the Lakes, from its being watered by that river, and a great number of ſmall lakes.

The landed property of which this gentleman, who founded Bath, &c. has had the active management, is ſaid to have amounted originally to no leſs than ſix millions of acres, the greater part of which belonged to an individual

dividual in England. The method he has taken to improve this property has been, by granting land in ſmall portions and on long credits to individuals who would immediately improve it, and in larger portions and on a ſhorter credit to others who purchaſed on ſpeculation, the lands in both caſes being mortgaged for the payment of the purchaſe money; thus, ſhould the money not be paid at the appointed time, he could not be a loſer, as the lands were to be returned to him, and ſhould they happen to be at all improved, as was moſt likely to be the caſe, he would be a conſiderable gainer even by having them returned on his hands; moreover, if a poor man, willing to ſettle on his land, had not money ſufficient to build a houſe and to go on with the neceſſary improvements, he has at once ſupplied him, having had a large capital himſelf, with what money he wanted for that purpoſe, or ſent his own workmen, of whom he keeps a prodigious number employed, to build a houſe for him, at the ſame time taking the man's note at three, four, or five years, for the coſt of the houſe, &c. with intereſt. If the man ſhould be unable to pay at the appointed time, the houſe, mortgaged like the lands, muſt revert to the original proprietor, and the money ariſing from its ſale, and that of the farm adjoining, partly improved, will in all probability be

be found to amount to more than what the poor man had promiſed to pay for it: but a man taking up land in America in this manner, at a moderate price, cannot fail, if induſtrious, of making money ſufficient to pay for it, as well as for a houſe, at the appointed time.

The numbers that have been induced by theſe temptations, not to be met with elſewhere in the States, to ſettle in the Geneſee County, is aſtoniſhing; and numbers are ſtill flocking to it every year, as not one third of the lands are yet diſpoſed of. It was currently reported in the county, as I paſſed through it, that this gentleman, of whom I have been ſpeaking, had, in the notes of the people to whom he had ſold land payable at the end of three, or four, or five years, the immenſe ſum of two millions of dollars. The original coſt of the land was not more than a few pence per acre; what therefore muſt be the profits!

It may readily be imagined, that the granting of land on ſuch very eaſy terms could not fail to draw crowds of ſpeculators (a ſort of gentry with which America abounds in every quarter) to this part of the country; and indeed we found, as we paſſed along, that every little town and village throughout the country abounded with them, and each place, in conſequence, exhibited a picture of idleneſs and diſſipation

diſſipation. The following letter, ſuppoſed to come from a farmer, though ſomewhat ludicrous, does not give an inaccurate deſcription of one of theſe young ſpeculators, and of what is going on in this neighbourhood. It appeared in a news-paper publiſhed at Wilkeſbarré, on the Suſquehannah, and I give it to you verbatim, becauſe, being written by an American, it will perhaps carry more weight with it than any thing I could ſay on the ſame ſubject.

" To the Printers of the Wilkeſbarré Gazette.

" Gentlemen,

" It is painful to reflect, that ſpeculation has " raged to ſuch a degree of late, that honeſt " induſtry, and all the humble virtues that " walk in her train, are diſcouraged and ren- " dered unfaſhionable.

" It is to be lamented too, that diſſipation " is ſooner introduced in new ſettlements than " induſtry and economy.

" I have been led to theſe reflections by " converſing with my ſon, who has juſt re- " turned from the Lakes or Geneſee, though " he has neither been to the one or the other; " —in ſhort, he has been to Bath, the ce- " lebrated Bath, and has returned both a ſpe- " culator and a gentleman; having ſpent his " money, ſwopped away my horſe, caught the

" fever

" fever and ague, and, what is infinitely worſe,
" that horrid diſorder which ſome call the
" terra-phobia *.

" We can hear nothing from the poor crea-
" ture now (in his ravings) but of the captain
" and Billy—of ranges—townſhips—num-
" bers—thouſands—hundreds—acres—Bath
" —fairs—races—heats—bets—purſes—
" ſilk ſtockings—fortunes—fevers—agues, &c.
" &c. &c. My ſon has part of a townſhip for
" ſale, and it is diverting enough to hear him
" narrate its pedigree, qualities, and ſituation.
" In fine, it lies near Bath, and the captain
" himſelf once owned, and for a long time re-
" ſerved it. It coſt my ſon but five dollars
" per acre; he was offered ſix in half a minute
" after his purchaſe; but he is poſitively de-
" termined to have eight, beſides ſome precious
" reſerves. One thing is very much in my
" boy's favour—he has ſix years credit. Another
" thing is ſtill more ſo—he is not worth a
" ſous, nor ever will be at this rate. Previous
" to his late excurſion the lad worked well,
" and was contented at home on my farm; but
" now work is out of the queſtion with him.
" There is no managing my boy at home;
" theſe golden dreams ſtill beckon him back
" to Bath, where, as he ſays, no one need

* Our farmer does not ſeem to have well underſtood the import of this word, but we may readily gueſs at his meaning.

" either work or ſtarve; where, though a man
" may have the ague nine months in the year,
" he may conſole himſelf in ſpending the other
" three faſhionably at the races.

" *A Farmer.*"

" *Hanover, October* 25th, 1796.

The town of Bath ſtands on a plain, ſurrounded on three ſides by hills of a moderate height. The plain is almoſt wholly diveſted of its trees; but the hills are ſtill uncleared, and have a very pleaſing appearance from the town. At the foot of the hills runs a ſtream of pure water, over a bed of gravel, which is called Conhocton Creek. There is a very conſiderable fall in this creek juſt above the town, which affords one of the fineſt ſeats for mills poſſible. Extenſive ſaw and flour mills have already been erected upon it, the principal ſaw in the former of which gave, when we viſited the mill, one hundred and twenty ſtrokes in a minute, ſufficient to cut, in the ſame ſpace of time, ſeven ſquare feet, ſuperficial meaſure, of oak timber; yet the miller informed us, that when the water was high it would cut much faſter.

Conhocton Creek, about twenty miles below Bath, falls into Tyoga River, which, after a courſe of about thirty miles, empties itſelf into the eaſtern branch of the River Suſquehannah.

During

During floods you may go down in light bateaux along the creek, Tyoga and Suſquehannah rivers, the whole way from Bath to the Cheſapeak Bay, without interruption; and in the fall of the year there is generally water ſufficient for canoes from Bath downwards; but owing to the great drought that prevailed through every part of the country this year, the depth of water in the creek was found inſufficient to float even a canoe of the ſmalleſt ſize. Had it been practicable, it was our intention to have proceeded from Bath by water; but finding that it was not, we once more ſet off on foot, and purſued our way along the banks of the river till we came to a ſmall village of eight or ten houſes, called Newtown, about thirty miles diſtant from Bath. Here we found the ſtream tolerably deep, and the people informed us, that excepting at one or two narrow ſhoals, they were certain that in every part of it, lower down, there was ſufficient water for canoes; accordingly, determined to be our own watermen, being five in number including our ſervants, we purchaſed a couple of canoes from two farmers, who lived on the banks of the river, and having laſhed them together, in order to render them more ſteady and ſafe, we put our baggage on board, and boldly embarked.

It was about three o'clock on a remarkably

clear though cold afternoon that we left the village, and the current being ſtrong, we hoped to be able to reach before night a tavern, ſituated, as we were told, on the banks of the river, about ſix miles below Newtown. For the firſt two miles we got on extremely well; but beyond this the river proving to be much ſhallower than we had been led to believe, we found it a matter of the utmoſt difficulty to proceed. Our canoes repeatedly ſtruck upon the ſhoals, and ſo much time was conſumed in ſetting them again free, that before we had accompliſhed more than two thirds of our voyage the day cloſed. As night advanced a very ſenſible change was obſervable in the weather; a heavy ſhower of hail came pouring down, and, involved in thick darkneſs, whilſt the moon was obſcured by a cloud, our canoes were drifted by the current, to which, being unable to ſee our way, we had conſigned them, on a bank in the middle of the river. In endeavouring to extricate ourſelves we unfortunately, owing to the darkneſs, took a wrong direction, and at the end of a few minutes found our canoes ſo firmly wedged in the gravel that it was impoſſible to move them. Nothing now remained to be done but for every one of us to jump into the water, and to put his ſhoulder to the canoes. This we accordingly did, and having previouſly unlaſhed,

laſhed, in order to render them more manageable, we in a ſhort time contrived to haul one of them into deep water; here, however, the rapidity of the current was ſo great, that notwithſtanding all our endeavours to the contrary, the canoe was forcibly ſwept away from us, and in the attempt to hold it faſt we had the misfortune to ſee it nearly filled with water.

Deprived thus of one of our canoes, and of a great part of our baggage in it, which, for ought we knew, was irrecoverably loſt, we determined to proceed more cautiouſly with the remaining one; having returned, therefore, to the bank, we carried every thing that was in the canoe on our ſhoulders to the ſhore, which was about forty yards diſtant; no very eaſy or agreeable taſk, as the water reached up to our waiſts, and the current was ſo ſtrong that it was with the utmoſt difficulty we could keep our feet. The canoe being emptied, we brought it, as nearly as we could gueſs, to the ſpot where the other one had been ſwept away from us, and one of the party then getting into it with a paddle, we committed it, purſuant to his deſire, to the ſtream, hoping that it would be carried down after the other, and that thus we ſhould be able to recover both it and the things which it contained. In a few ſeconds the ſtream carried the canoe out of our ſight, for the moon ſhone but faintly through

the clouds, and being all of us totally unacquainted with the river, we could not but feel ſome concern for the perſonal ſafety of our companion. Before many minutes, however, were elapſed, we had the ſatisfaction of hearing his voice at a diſtance, and having made the beſt of our way along the ſhore to the ſpot from whence the ſound proceeded, we had the ſatisfaction to find that he had been carried in ſafety cloſe beſide the canoe which had been loſt; we were not a little pleaſed alſo at finding our portmanteaus at the bottom of the canoe, though well ſoaked in water; but ſuch of our clothes as we had taken off preparatory to going into the water, together with ſeveral light articles, were all loſt.

It froze ſo very hard now, that in a few minutes our portmanteaus, and ſuch of our garments as had been wetted, were covered with a coat of ice, and our limbs were quite benumbed, in conſequence of our having waded ſo often through the river. Deſirous, however, as we were to get to a houſe, we determined, in the firſt inſtance, to diſpoſe of our baggage in a ſafe place, leſt it might be pillaged. A deep hollow that appeared under ſome fallen trees ſeemed well adapted for the purpoſe, and having ſtowed it there, and covered it with leaves, we advanced forward. There were no traces whatſoever of a path in the

the woods where we landed, and for upwards of a mile we had to force our way through the buſhes along the banks of the river; but at the end of that diſtance, we hit upon one, which in a ſhort time brought us to a miſerable little log houſe. At this houſe no accommodation whatſoever was to be had, but we were told, that if we followed the path through the woods for about a mile farther, we ſhould come to a waggon road, upon which we ſhould find another houſe, where probably we might gain admittance. We reached this houſe according to the directions we had received; we readily gained admittance into it, and the blaze of an immenſe wood fire, piled half way up the chimney, ſoon made us amends for what we had ſuffered from the inclemency of the weather. The coldneſs of the air, together with the fatigue which we had gone through in the courſe of the day, had by this time given a keen edge to our appetites; no ſooner therefore had we warmed ourſelves than we began to make enquiries about what we could get to ſatisfy the calls of hunger; but had we aſked for a ſheep or an ox for ſupper at an inn in England, the man of the houſe could not, I verily believe, have been more amazed than was our American landlord at theſe enquiries: "The women were in bed"—"He knew not where "to find the keys"—"He did not believe there

" was any thing in the pantry"—" Proviſions " were very ſcarce in the country"—" If he " gave us any there would not be enough for " the family in the morning"—Such were his anſwers to us. However we plied him ſo cloſely, and gave him ſuch a pitiable deſcription of our ſufferings, that at length he was moved; the keys were found, the pantry opened, and to ſatisfy the hunger of five hungry young men, two little flour cakes, ſcarcely as big as a man's hand each, and about a pint and a half of milk, were brought forth. He vowed he could give us nothing more; his wife would never pardon him if he did not leave enough for their breakfaſts in the morning; obliged therefore to remain ſatisfied, we eat our little pittance, and then laid ourſelves down to reſt on our ſkins, which we had brought with us on our ſhoulders.

In the morning we found that the man had really made an accurate report of the ſtate of his pantry. There was barely enough in it for the family, and unable to get a ſingle morſel to eat, we ſet out for the little houſe where we had firſt ſtopped the preceding night, which was the only one within two or three miles, there hoping to find the inhabitants better provided for: not a bit of bread however was to be had here; but the woman of the houſe told us, that ſhe had ſome Indian corn meal,

and

and that if we could wait for an hour or two ſhe would bake a loaf for us. This was moſt grateful intelligence: we only begged of her to make it large enough, and then ſet off to ſearch in the interim for our canoes and baggage. At ſeveral other places, in going down the Suſquehannah, we afterwards found an equal ſcarcity of proviſions with what we did in this neighbourhood. One morning in particular, after having proceeded for about four or five miles in our canoe, we ſtopped to breakfaſt; but nothing eatable was there to be had at the firſt houſe we went to, except a few potatoes that were roaſting before the fire. The people very cheerfully gave us two or three, and told us at the ſame time, that if we went to ſome houſes at the oppoſite ſide of the river we ſhold moſt probably find better fare: we did ſo; but here the inhabitants were ſtill more deſtitute. On aſking them where we ſhould be likely to get any thing to eat, an old woman anſwered, that if we went to a village about four miles lower down the river, we ſhould find a houſe, ſhe believed, where "*they* "*did keep victuals*," an expreſſion ſo remarkable that I could not help noting it down immediately. We reached this houſe, and finding it well ſtocked with proviſions of every kind, took care to provide ourſelves, not only with what we wanted for immediate uſe, but alſo

alſo with what we might want on a future occaſion, in caſe we came to any place equally deſtitute of proviſions as thoſe which we had before ſtopped at; a precaution that was far from proving unneceſſary.

But to return. We found our canoes and baggage juſt as we had left them, and having embarked once more, we made the beſt of our way down to the houſe where we had beſpoke breakfaſt, which ſtood on the banks of the river. The people here were extremely civil; they aſſiſted us in making freſh paddles in lieu of thoſe which we had loſt the night before; and for the trifle which we gave them above what they aſked us for our breakfaſts they were very thankful, a moſt unuſual circumſtance in the United States.

After breakfaſt we purſued our way for about ſeven miles down the river, but in the courſe of this diſtance we were obliged to get into the water more than a dozen different times, I believe, to drag the canoes over the ſhoals; in ſhort, by the time we arrived at a houſe in the afternoon, we were ſo completely diſguſted with our water conveyance, that had we not been able to procure two men, as we did in the neighbourhood, to conduct our canoes to the mouth of Tyoga River, where there was reaſon to imagine that the water would be found deeper, we ſhould certainly have

have left them behind us. The men ſet out at an early hour in the morning, and we proceeded ſome time afterwards on foot along the banks, but ſo difficult was the navigation, that we reached Tyoga Point or Lochartzburg, a ſmall town built at the mouth of the river, ſeveral hours before them.

On arriving at this place, we heard to our diſappointment, that the Suſquehannah, although generally at this ſeaſon of the year navigable for boats drawing four feet water, was now nearly as low as the Tyoga River, ſo that in many places, particularly at the rapids, there was ſcarcely ſufficient water to float a canoe over the ſharp rocks with which the bed of the river abounds; in fine, we were informed that the channel was now intricate and dangerous, and that no perſon unacquainted with the river could attempt to proceed down it without great riſk; we found no difficulty, however, in hiring from amongſt the watermen accuſtomed to ply on the river, a man that was perfectly well acquainted with it; and having exchanged our two canoes, purſuant to his advice, for one of a very large ſize, capable of holding us all conveniently, we renewed our voyage.

From Lochartzburgh to Wilkeſbarré, or Wyoming, ſituated on the ſouth-eaſt ſide of the Suſquehannah, the diſtance is about ninety miles,

miles, and when the river is full, and the current of courſe ſtrong, as is uſually the caſe in the fall and ſpring of the year, you may go down the whole of this diſtance in one day; but owing to the lowneſs of the water we were no leſs than four days performing the voyage, though we made the utmoſt expedition poſſible. In many parts of the river, indeed, we found the current very rapid; at the Falls of Wyaluſing, for inſtance, we were carried down three or four miles in about a quarter of an hour; but in other places, where the river was deep, ſcarcely any current was perceptible in it, and we were obliged to work our way with paddles. The bed of the river abounds with rock and gravel, and the water is ſo tranſparent, that in many parts, where it muſt have been at leaſt twenty feet deep, the ſmalleſt pebble was diſtinguiſhable at the bottom. The width of the river varies from fifty to three hundred yards, and ſcarcely any ſtream in America has a more irregular courſe; in ſome places it runs in a direction diametrically oppoſite to what it does in others. The country through which this (the eaſtern) branch of the Suſquehannah paſſes, is extremely uneven and rugged; indeed, from Lochartzburgh till within a ſhort diſtance of Wilkeſbarré, it is bounded the entire way by ſteep mountains either on the one ſide or the other. The mountains

mountains are never to be met with at both ſides of the ſame part of the river, except it be at places where the river takes a very ſudden bend; but wherever you perceive a range of mountains on one ſide, you are ſure to find an extenſive plain on the oppoſite one; ſcarcely in any part do the mountains extend for more than one mile together on the ſame ſide of the river, and in many inſtances, during the courſe of one mile, you will perceive more than a dozen different changes of the mountains from one ſide to the other. It may readily be imagined, from this deſcription of the eaſtern branch of the Suſquehannah, that the ſcenery along it muſt be very fine; and, indeed, I think there is no river in America that abounds with ſuch a variety and number of pictureſque views. At every bend the proſpect varies, and there is ſcarcely a ſpot between Lochartzburg and Wilkeſbarré where the painter would not find a ſubject well worthy of his pencil. The mountains, covered with bold rocks and woods, afford the fineſt foreground imaginable; the plains, adorned with cultivated fields and patches of wood, and watered by the noble river, of which you catch a glimpſe here and there, fill up the middle part of the landſcape; and the blue hills, peeping up at a diſtance, terminate the view in the moſt pleaſing manner.

The

The country bordering upon the Suſquehannah abounds with deer, and as we paſſed down we met with numberleſs parties of the country people engaged in driving theſe animals. The deer, on being purſued in the neighbouring country, immediately make for the river, where men being concealed in buſhes placed on the ſtrand, at the part to which it is expected they will come down, take the opportunity of ſhooting them as ſoon as they enter the water. Should the deer not happen to come near theſe ambuſhes, the hunters then follow them in canoes: it ſeldom happens that they eſcape after having once taken to the water.

Very fine fiſh are found in every part of the Suſquehannah, and the river is much frequented by wild fowl, particularly by the canvaſs back duck.

The whole way between Lochartzburg and Wilkeſbarré are ſettlements on each ſide of the river, at no great diſtance from each other; there are alſo ſeveral ſmall towns on the banks of the river. The principal one is French Town, ſituated within a ſhort diſtance of the Falls of Wyaluſing, on the weſtern ſide of the river. This town was laid out at the expence of ſeveral philanthropic perſons in Pennſylvania, who entered into a ſubſcription for the purpoſe, as a place of retreat for the unfortunate

nate French emigrants who fled to America. The town contains about fifty log houſes; and for the uſe of the inhabitants a conſiderable track of land has been purchaſed adjoining to it, which has been divided into farms. The French ſettled here ſeem, however, to have no great inclination or ability to cultivate the earth, and the greater part of them have let their lands at a ſmall yearly rent to Americans, and amuſe themſelves with driving deer, fiſhing, and fowling; they live entirely to themſelves; they hate the Americans, and the Americans in the neighbourhood hate, and accuſe them of being an idle diſſipated ſet. The manners of the two people are ſo very different that it is impoſſible they ſhould ever agree.

Wilkeſbarré, formerly Wyoming, is the chief town of Luzerne county. It is ſituated on a plain, bounded on one ſide by the Suſquehannah, and on the other by a range of mountains, and contains about one hundred and fifty wooden dwelling houſes, a church, court houſe, and gaol. It was here that the dreadful maſſacre was committed, during the American war, by the Indians under the command of colonel Butler, which is recorded in moſt of the hiſtories of the war, and which will for ever remain a blot on the Engliſh annals. Several of the houſes in which the unfortunate

victims retired to defend themſelves, on being refuſed all quarter, are ſtill ſtanding, perforated in every part with balls; the remains of others that were ſet on fire are alſo ſtill to be ſeen, and the inhabitants will on no account ſuffer them to be repaired. The Americans are equally tenacious of the ruins in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia.

It was our intention at firſt to have proceeded down the river from hence as far as Sunburg, or Harriſburgh; but the weather being now ſo cold as to render a water conveyance, eſpecially a canoe, where you are always obliged to ſit very ſtill, extremely diſagreeable, we determined to croſs the Blue Mountains to Bethlehem in Pennſylvania, ſituated about ſixty-five miles to the ſouth-eaſt of Wilkeſbarré; we accordingly hired horſes, as we had done on a former occaſion, to carry our baggage, and proceeded ourſelves on foot. We ſet out in the afternoon, the day after that on which we terminated our voyage, and before evening croſſed the ridge of mountains which bounds the plain of Wilkeſbarré. Theſe mountains, which are extremely rugged and ſtony, abound with iron ore and coal; for the manufacture of the former ſeveral forges have been eſtabliſhed, but no uſe is made of the coal, there being plenty of wood as yet in the country, which is eſteemed much more agreeable fuel.

fuel. From the top of them you have a very grand view of the plain below, on which ſtands the town of Wilkeſbarré, and of the river Suſquehannah, which may be traced above the town, winding amidſt the hills for a great number of miles.

The country beyond the mountains is extremely rough, and but very thinly ſettled, of courſe ſtill much wooded. The people, at the few houſes ſcattered through it, appeared to live much better than the inhabitants of any other part of the States which I before paſſed through. At every houſe where we ſtopped we found abundance of good bread, butter, tea, coffee, chocolate, and veniſon; and indeed we fared ſumptuouſly here, in compariſon to what we had done for many weeks preceding.

The woods in many parts of this country conſiſted almoſt wholly of hemlock trees, which are of the pine ſpecies, and grow only on poor ground. Many of them were of an unuſually large ſize, and their tops ſo cloſely matted together, that after having entered into the depth of the woods you could ſee the ſky in but very few places. The bruſh wood under theſe trees, different from what I ever ſaw elſewhere, conſiſted for the moſt part of the oleander and of the kalmia laurel, whoſe deep green ſerved to render the gloom of the woods ſtill more ſolemn; indeed they ſeemed com-

pletely to anſwer the deſcription given by the poets of the ſacred groves; and it were impoſſible to enter them without being ſtruck with awe.

About twenty miles before you come to Bethlehem, in going thither from Wilkeſbarré, you croſs the ridge of Blue Mountains at what is called the Wind Gap; how it received that name I never could learn. This gap is nearly a mile wide, and it exhibits a tremendouſly wild and rugged ſcene. The road does not run at the bottom of the gap, but along the edge of the ſouth mountain, about two thirds of the way up. Above you on the right, nothing is to be ſeen but broken rocks and trees, and on the left you look down a ſteep precipice. The rocks at the bottom of the precipice have every appearance, it is ſaid (for we did not deſcend into it) of having been waſhed by water for ages; and from hence it has been conjectured that this muſt have been the original channel of the River Delaware, which now paſſes through the ridge, at a place about fifteen miles to the north weſt. Whether this were the caſe or not it is impoſſible to determine at this day; but it is certain, from the appearance of the country on each ſide of the Delaware, that a great change has taken place in this quarter, in conſequence of ſome vaſt inundation.

On

VIEW of BETHLEHEM a Moravian settlement.

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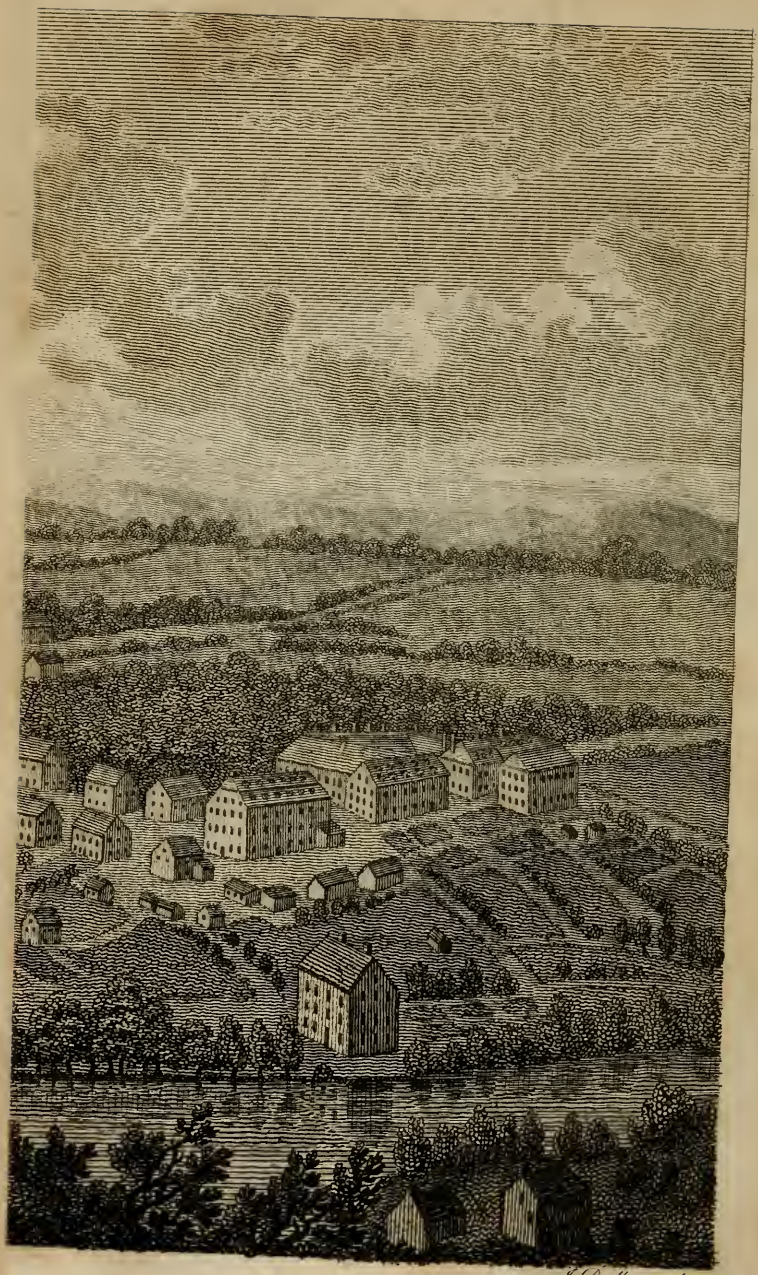

J. Dadley sculpt.

'ravian settlement.

Piccadilly.

On the Atlantic ſide of the mountains the country is much leſs rugged than on the oppoſite one, and it is more cleared and much more thickly ſettled: the inhabitants are for the moſt part of German extraction.

Bethlehem is the principal ſettlement, in North America, of the Moravians, or United Brethren. It is moſt agreeably ſituated on a riſing ground, bounded on one ſide by the river Leheigh, which falls into the Delaware, and on the other by a creek, which has a very rapid current, and affords excellent ſeats for a great number of mills. The town is regularly laid out, and contains about eighty ſtrong built ſtone dwelling houſes and a large church. Three of the dwelling houſes are very ſpacious buildings, and are appropriated reſpectively to the accommodation of the unmarried young men of the ſociety, of the unmarried females, and of the widows. In theſe houſes different manufactures are carried on, and the inmates of each are ſubject to a diſcipline approaching ſomewhat to that of a monaſtic inſtitution. They eat together in a refectory; they ſleep in dormitories; they attend morning and evening prayers in the chapel of the houſe; they work for a certain number of hours in the day; and they have ſtated intervals allotted to them for recreation. They are not ſubjected, by the rules of the ſociety, to perpetual confinement;

but they ſeldom, notwithſtanding, go beyond the bounds of their walks and gardens, except it be occaſionally to viſit their friends in the town.

The Moravians, though they do not enjoin celibacy, yet think it highly meritorious, and the young perſons of different ſexes have but very little intercourſe with each other; they never enter each other's houſes, and at church they are obliged to ſit ſeparate; it is only in conſequence of his having ſeen her at a diſtance, perhaps, that a batchelor is induced to propoſe for a young woman in marriage, and he is not permitted to offer his propoſals in perſon to the object of his choice, but merely through the medium of the ſuperintendant of the female houſe. If from the report of the elders and wardens of the ſociety it appears to the ſuperintendant that he is able to maintain a wife, ſhe then acquaints her protegée with the offer, and ſhould ſhe conſent, they are married immediately, but if ſhe do not, the ſuperintendant ſelects another female from the houſe, whom ſhe imagines would be ſuitable to the young man, and on his approval of her they are as quickly married. Haſty as theſe marriages are, they are never known to be attended with unhappineſs; for being taught from their earlieſt infancy to keep thoſe paſſions under controul, which occaſion ſo much miſchief amongſt the

maſs

maſs of mankind; being inured to regular habits of induſtry, and to a quiet ſober life; and being in their peaceable and retired ſettlements out of the reach of thoſe temptations which perſons are expoſed to who launch forth into the buſy world, and who mingle with the multitude, the parties meet with nought through life to interrupt their domeſtic repoſe.

Attached to the young men's and to the young women's houſes there are boarding ſchools for boys and girls, under the direction of proper teachers, which are alſo inſpected by the elders and wardens of the ſociety. Theſe ſchools are in great repute, and not only the children of Moravians are ſent to them, but alſo thoſe of many genteel perſons of a different perſuaſion, reſident in Philadelphia, New York, and other towns in the neighbouring States. The boys are inſtructed in the Latin, German, French, and Engliſh languages; arithmetic, muſic, drawing, &c.: the girls are likewiſe inſtructed in theſe different languages and ſciences, and, in ſhort, in every thing that is uſually taught at a female boarding ſchool, except dancing. When of a ſufficient age to provide for themſelves, the young women of the ſociety are admitted into the houſe deſtined for their accommodation, where embroidery, fine needle-work, carding, ſpinning, knitting, &c. &c. and other works ſuitable to females, are

carried on. A ſeparate room is allotted for every different buſineſs, and a female, ſomewhat older than the reſt, preſides in it, to inſpect the work, and preſerve regularity. Perſons are appointed to diſpoſe of the ſeveral articles manufactured in the houſe, and the money which they produce is diſtributed amongſt the individuals engaged in manufacturing them, who, after paying a certain ſum towards the maintenance of the houſe, and a certain ſum beſides into the public fund of the ſociety, are allowed to keep the remainder for themſelves.

After the boys have finiſhed their ſchool education, they are apprenticed to the buſineſs which accords moſt with their inclination. Should this be a buſineſs or trade that is carried on in the young men's houſe, they at once go there to learn it, but if at the houſe of an individual in the town, they only board and lodge at the young men's houſe. If they are inclined to agricultural purſuits, they are then put under the care of one of the farmers of the ſociety. The young men ſubſcribe to the ſupport of their houſe, and to the public fund, juſt as the young women do; the widows do the ſame; and every individual in the town likewiſe contributes a ſmall ſum weekly to the general fund of the ſociety.

Situated upon the creek, which ſkirts the town, there is a flour mill, a ſaw mill, an oil mill,

mill, a fulling mill, a mill for grinding bark and dye ſtuff, a tan yard, a currier's yard; and on the Leleigh River an extenſive brewery, at which very good malt liquor is manufactured. Theſe mills, &c. belong to the ſociety at large, and the profits ariſing from them, the perſons ſeverally employed in conducting them being firſt handſomely rewarded for their ſervices, are paid into the public fund. The lands for ſome miles round the town, which are highly improved, likewiſe belong to the ſociety, as does alſo the tavern, and the profits ariſing from them are diſpoſed of in the ſame manner as thoſe ariſing from the mills, the perſons employed in managing the farms, and attending to the tavern, being nothing more than ſtewards or agents of the ſociety. The fund thus raiſed is employed in relieving the diſtreſſed brethren of the ſociety in other parts of the world, in forming new ſettlements, and in defraying the expence of the miſſions for the purpoſe of propagating the goſpel amongſt the heathens.

The tavern at Bethlehem is very commodious, and it is the neateſt and beſt conducted one, without exception, that I ever met with in any part of America. Having communicated to the landlord, on arriving at it, our wiſh to ſee the town and public buildings, he immediately diſpatched a meſſenger for one of the elders, and in leſs than a quarter of an hour,

brother Thomas, a lively freſh coloured little man, of about fifty years of age, entered the room: he was dreſſed in a plain blue coat and waiſtcoat, brown corderoy breeches, and a large round hat; there was goodneſs and innocence in his looks, and his manners were ſo open and unconſtrained, that it was impoſſible not to become familiar with him at once. When we were ready to ſally forth, he placed himſelf between two of us, and leaning on our arms, and chatting without ceremony, he conducted us firſt to the young women's houſe. Here we were ſhewn into a neat parlour, whilſt brother Thomas went to aſk permiſſion for us to ſee the houſe. In a few minutes the ſuperintendant herſelf came; brother Thomas introduced her to us, and accompanied by them both we viſited the different apartments.

The houſe is extenſive, and the paſſages and ſtair-caſes are commodious and airy, but the work rooms are ſmall, and to ſuch a pitch were they heated by ſtoves, that on entering into them at firſt we could ſcarcely breathe. The ſtoves, which they uſe, are built in the German ſtyle. The fire is incloſed in a large box or caſe formed of glazed tiles, and the warm air is thence conducted, through flues, into ſimilar large caſes placed in different parts of the room, by which means every part is rendered equally warm. About a dozen females

males or more, nearly of the ſame age, were ſeated at work in each apartment. The entrance of ſtrangers did not interrupt them in the leaſt; they went on with their work, and except the inſpectreſs, who never failed politely to riſe and ſpeak to us, they did not even ſeem to take any notice of our being in the room.

The dreſs of the ſiſterhood, though not quite uniform, is very nearly ſo. They wear plain calico, linen, or ſtuff gowns, with aprons, and cloſe tight linen caps, made with a peak in front, and tied under the chin with a piece of riband. Pink ribands are ſaid to be worn as a badge by thoſe who are inclined to marry; however, I obſerved that all the unmarried women wore them, not excepting thoſe whoſe age and features ſeemed to have excluded them from every chance of becoming the votaries of Hymen.

The dormitory of the female houſe is a very ſpacious apartment in the upper ſtory, which is aired by a large ventilator in the ceiling. It contains about fifty boarded beds without teſters, each calculated to hold one perſon. They ſleep here during winter time in the German ſtyle, between two feather beds, to which the ſheets and blankets are ſtitched faſt; in ſummer time the heat is too great here to admit even of a ſingle blanket.

After

After having gone through the different apartments of the female houſe, we were conducted by the ſuperintendant into a ſort of ſhop, where different little articles of fancy work, manufactured by the ſiſterhood, are laid out to the beſt advantage. It is always expected that ſtrangers viſiting the houſe will lay out ſome trifling ſum here; and this is the only reward which any member of the ſociety expects for the trouble of conducting a ſtranger throughout every part of the town.

The houſe of the ſiſterhood exhibits a picture of the utmoſt neatneſs and regularity, as do likewiſe the young men's and the widows houſes; and indeed the ſame may be ſaid of every private houſe throughout the town. The mills, brewery, &c. which are built on the moſt approved plans, are alſo kept in the very neateſt order.

Brother Thomas, after having ſhewn us the different public buildings and works, next introduced us into the houſes of ſeveral of the married men, that were moſt diſtinguiſhed for their ingenuity, and in ſome of them, particularly at the houſe of a cabinet maker, we were entertained with very curious pieces of workmanſhip. This cabinet maker brought us a book of Indian ink and tinted drawings, his own performances, which would have been a credit to a perſon in his ſituation in any part of the world.

The manufactures in general carried on at Bethlehem conſiſt of woollen and linen cloths, hats, cotton and worſted caps and ſtockings, gloves, ſhoes, carpenters, cabinet makers, and turners work, clocks, and a few other articles of hardware, &c. &c.

The church is a plain building of ſtone, adorned with pictures from ſacred hiſtory. It is furniſhed with a tolerable organ, as likewiſe are the chapels of the young men's and young women's houſes; they accompany their hymns, beſides, with violoncellos, violins, flutes, &c. The whole ſociety attends the church on a Sunday, and when any one of the ſociety dies, all the remaining members attend his funeral, which is conducted with great ſolemnity, though with little pomp: they never go into mourning for their departed friends.

Every houſe in the town is ſupplied with an abundance of excellent water from a ſpring, which is forced through pipes by means of an hydraulic machine worked by water, and which is ſituated on the banks of the creek. Some of the houſes are ſupplied with water in every room. The machine is very ſimple, and would eaſily raiſe the water of the ſpring, if neceſſary, ſeveral hundred feet.

The ſpring from whence the houſes are ſupplied with water ſtands nearly in the center of the town, and over it, a large ſtone houſe with very

very thick walls, is erected. Houſes like this are very common in America; they are called ſpring houſes. and are built for the purpoſe of preſerving meat, milk, butter, &c. during the heats of ſummer. This ſpring houſe in Bethlehem is common to the whole town; a ſhelf or board in it is allotted to each family, and though there is no watch placed over it, and the door be only ſecured by a latch, yet every perſon is certain of finding, when he comes for it, his plate of butter or bowl of milk, &c. exactly in the ſame ſtate as when he put it in.

The Moravians ſtudy to render their conduct ſtrictly conformable to the principles of the Chriſtian religion; but very different notions, notwithſtanding, are, and, no doubt, will be entertained reſpecting ſome of their tenets. Every unprejudiced perſon, however, that has viſited their ſettlements muſt acknowledge, that their moral conduct is truly excellent, and is ſuch as would, if generally adopted, make men happy in the extreme. They live together like members of one large family; the moſt perfect harmony ſubſiſts between them, and they ſeem to have but one wiſh at heart, the propagation of the goſpel, and the good of mankind. They are in general of a grave turn of mind; but nothing of that ſtiffneſs, or of that affected ſingularity, or pride, as I will call it,

it, prevalent amongſt the Quakers, is obſervable in their manners. Wherever their ſociety has extended itſelf in America, the moſt happy conſequences have reſulted from it; good order and regularity have become conſpicuous in the behaviour of the people of the neighbourhood, and arts and manufactures have been introduced into the country.

As the whole of the plot of ground, on which Bethlehem ſtands; belongs to the ſociety, as well as the lands for a conſiderable way round the town, the Moravians here are not liable to be troubled by intruders, but any perſon that will conform to their line of conduct will be received into their ſociety with readineſs and cordiality. They appeared to take the greateſt delight in ſhewing us their town, and every thing belonging to it, and at parting lamented much that we could not ſtay longer with them, to ſee ſtill more of the manners and habits of the ſociety.

They do not ſeem deſirous of adding to the number of houſes in Bethlehem; but whenever there is an increaſe of people, they ſend them off to another part of the country, there to form a new ſettlement. Since Bethlehem was founded, they have eſtabliſhed two other towns in Pennſylvania, Nazareth and Letitz. The former of theſe ſtands at the diſtance of about ten miles from Bethlehem, and in coming

ing down from the Blue Mountains you pass through it; it is about half the size of Bethlehem, and built much on the same plan. Letitz is situated at a distance of about ten miles from Lancaster.

The country for many miles round Bethlehem is most pleasingly diversified with rising grounds; the soil is rich, and better cultivated than any part of America I before saw. Until within a few years past this neighbourhood has been distinguished for the salubrity of its climate, but fevers, chiefly bilious and intermittent, have increased to a very great degree of late, and, indeed, not only here, but in many other parts of Pennsylvania, which have been long settled. During the last autumn, more people suffered from sickness in the well cultivated parts of the country than had ever been remembered. Various reasons have been assigned for this increase of fevers in Pennsylvania, but it appears most probably to be owing to the unequal quantities of rain that have fallen of late years, and to the unprecedented mildness of the winters.

Bethlehem is visited during summer time by great numbers of people from the neighbouring large towns, who are led thither by curiosity or pleasure; and regularly, twice a week throughout the year, a public stage waggon runs between it and Philadelphia. We

engaged

engaged this carriage to ourſelves, and early on the ſecond day from that on which we quitted Bethlehem, reached the capital, after an abſence of, ſomewhat more than, five months.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Leave Philadelphia.—Arrive at New York.—Viſit Long Iſland.—Dreadful havoc by the Yellow Fever.—Dutch Inhabitants ſuſpicious of Strangers.—Excellent Farmers.—Number of Inhabitants.—Culture of Corn.—Immenſe Quantities of Grouſe and Deer.—Laws to protect them.—Increaſe of the ſame.—Decreaſe of Beavers.—New York agreeable to Strangers.—Concluſion.

MY DEAR SIR, New York, January 1797.

AFTER having remained a few days at Philadelphia, in order to arrange ſome matters preparatory to my taking a final leave of that city, I ſet out once more for New York. The month of December had now arrived; conſiderable quantities of ſnow had fallen; and the keen winds from the north-weſt had already ſpread a thick cruſt of ice over

over the Delaware, whose majestic stream is always the last in this part of the country to feel the chilly touch of the hand of winter. The ice however, was not yet strong enough to sustain the weight of a stage carriage; neither was it very readily to be broken; so that when we reached the falls of the river, where it is usual to cross in going from Philadelphia to New York, we had to remain for upwards of two hours, shivering before the bitter blasts, until a passage was opened for the boat, which was to convey us and our vehicle to the opposite side. The crossing of the Delaware at this place with a wheel carriage, even when the river is frozen over and the ice sufficiently thick to bear, is generally a matter of considerable inconvenience and trouble to travellers, owing to the large irregular masses of ice formed there, when the frost first sets in, by the impetuosity of the current, which breaking away the slender flakes of ice from the edges of the banks, gradually drifts them up in layers over each other; it is only at this rugged part, that a wheel carriage can safely pass down the banks of the river.

When the ground is covered with snow, a sleigh or sledge is by far the most commodious sort of carriage to travel in, as neither it nor the passengers it contains are liable to receive any injury whatsoever from an overturn, and

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as, added to this, you may proceed much faſter and eaſier in it than in a carriage on wheels; having ſaid then that there was ſnow on the ground, it will perhaps be a ſubject of wonder to you, that we had not one of theſe ſafe and agreeable carriages to take us to New York; if ſo, I muſt inform you, that no experienced traveller in the middle ſtates ſets out on a long journey in a ſleigh at the commencement of winter, as unexpected thaws at this period now take place very commonly, and ſo rapid are they, that in the courſe of one morning the ſnow ſometimes entirely diſappears; a ſerious object of conſideration in this country, where, if you happen to be left in the lurch with your ſleigh, other carriages are not to be had at a moment's warning. In the preſent inſtance, notwithſtanding the intenſe ſeverity of the cold, and the appearances there were of its long continuance, yet I had not been eight and forty hours at New York when every veſtige of froſt was gone, and the air became as mild as in the month of September.

This ſudden change in the weather afforded me an opportunity of ſeeing, to much greater advantage than might have been expected at this ſeaſon of the year, parts of New York and Long Iſlands, which the ſhortneſs of my ſtay in this neighbourhood had not permitted me to viſit in the ſummer. After leaving the im-

mediate vicinage of the city, which ſtands at the ſouthern extremity of the former of theſe two iſlands, but little is to be met with that deſerves attention; the ſoil, indeed, is fertile, and the face of the country is not unpleaſingly diverſified with riſing grounds; but there is nothing grand in any of the views which it affords, nor did I obſerve one of the numerous ſeats, with which it is overſpread, that was diſtinguiſhed either for its elegant neatneſs or the delightfulneſs of its ſituation; none of them will bear any compariſon with the charming little villas which adorn the banks of the Schuylkill near Philadelphia.

On Long Iſland much more will be found, in a picturesque point of view, to intereſt the traveller. On the weſtern ſide, in particular, bordering upon the Narrows, or that contracted channel between the iſlands, through which veſſels paſs in ſailing to New York from the Atlantic, the country is really romantic. The ground here is very much broken, and numberleſs large maſſes of wood ſtill remain ſtanding, through the viſtas in which you occaſionally catch the moſt delightful proſpects of the diſtant hills on Staten Iſland and the New Jerſey ſhore, and of the water, which is conſtantly enlivened by veſſels ſailing to and fro.

To an inhabitant of one of the large towns

on

on the coaſt of America, a country houſe is not merely deſirable as a place of retirement from noiſe and buſtle, where the owner may indulge his fancy in the contemplation of rural ſcenes, at a ſeaſon when nature is attired in her moſt pleaſing garb, but alſo as a ſafe retreat from the dreadful maladies which of late years have never failed to rage with more or leſs virulence in theſe places during certain months. When at Philadelphia the yellow fever committed ſuch dreadful havoc, ſparing neither the rich nor the poor, the young nor the aged, who had the confidence to remain in the city, or were unable to quit it, ſcarcely a ſingle inſtance occurred of any one of thoſe falling a victim to its baneful influence, who lived but one mile removed from town, where was a free circulation of air, and who at the ſame time ſtudiouſly avoided all communication with the ſick, or with thoſe who had viſited them; every perſon therefore at Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, &c. who is ſufficiently wealthy to afford it, has his country habitation in the neighbourhood of theſe reſpective places, to which he may retire in the hot unhealthy ſeaſon of the year; but this delightful part of Long Iſland, of which I have been ſpeaking, though it affords ſuch a number of charming ſituations for little villas, is unfortunately too far removed from New York to

be a convenient place of retreat to men so deeply engaged in commercial pursuits as are the greater number of the inhabitants of that city, and it remains almost destitute of houses; whilst another part of the island, more conveniently situated, is crowded with them, although the face of the country is here flat and sandy, devoid of trees, and wholly uninteresting.

The permanent residents on Long Island are chiefly of Dutch extraction, and they seem to have inherited all the coldness, reserve, and covetousness of their ancestors. It is a common saying in New York, that a Long Island man will conceal himself in his house on the approach of a stranger; and really the numberless instances of shyness I met with in the inhabitants seemed to argue, that there was some truth in the remark. If you do but ask any simple question relative to the neighbouring country, they will eye you with suspicion, and evidently strive to disengage themselves from you; widely different from the Anglo-Americans, whose inquisitiveness in similar circumstances would lead them to a thousand impertinent and troublesome enquiries, in order to discover what your business was in that place, and how they could possibly take any advantage of it. These Dutchmen are in general very excellent farmers; and several of

them have very extenſive tracks of land under cultivation, for the produce of which there is a convenient and ready market at New York. Amongſt them are to be found many very wealthy men; but except a few individuals, they live in a mean, penurious, and moſt uncomfortable manner. The population of the iſland is eſtimated at about thirty-ſeven thouſand ſouls, of which number near five thouſand are ſlaves. It is the weſtern part of the iſland which is the beſt inhabited; a circumſtance to be aſcribed, not ſo much to the fertility of the ſoil as its contiguity to the city of New York. Here are ſeveral conſiderable towns, as, Flatbuſh, Jamaica, Brooklynn, Fluſhing, Utrecht; the three firſt-mentioned of which contain each upwards of one hundred houſes. Brooklynn, the largeſt of them, is ſituated juſt oppoſite to New York, on the bank of the Eaſt River, and forms an agreeable object from the city.

The ſoil of Long Iſland is well adapted to the culture of ſmall grain and Indian corn; and the northern part, which is hilly, is ſaid to be peculiarly favourable to the production of fruit. The celebrated Newtown pippin, though now to be met with in almoſt every part of the ſtate of New York, and good in its kind, is yet ſuppoſed by many perſons to attain a higher flavour here than in any other part of America.

Of

Of the peculiar ſoil of the plains that are ſituated towards the center of this iſland, I have before had occaſion to ſpeak, when deſcribing thoſe in the weſtern parts of the ſtate of New York. One plain here, ſomewhat different from the reſt, is profuſely covered with ſtunted oaks and pines; but no grain will grow upon it, though it has been cleared, and experiments have been made for that purpoſe in many different places. This one goes under the appellation of Bruſhy Plain. Immenſe quantities of grouſe and deer are found amidſt the bruſhwood, with which it is covered, and which is ſo well calculated to afford ſhelter to theſe animals. Laws have been paſſed, not long ſince, to prevent the wanton deſtruction of the deer; in conſequence of which they are beginning to increaſe moſt rapidly, notwithſtanding ſuch great numbers are annually killed, as well for the New York market, as for the ſupport of the inhabitants of the iſland; indeed it is found that they are now increaſing in moſt of the ſettled parts of the ſtates of New York, where there is ſufficient wood to harbour them; whereas in the Indian territories, the deer, as well as moſt other wild animals, are becoming ſcarcer every year, notwithſtanding that the number of Indian hunters is alſo decreaſing; but theſe people purſue the ſame deſtructive ſyſtem of hunting, formerly

formerly practiſed on Long Iſland, killing every animal they meet, whether young or full grown. Notwithſtanding the ſtrong injunctions laid upon them by the Canadian traders, to ſpare ſome few beavers at each dam, in order to perpetuate the breed, they ſtill continue to kill theſe animals wherever they find them, ſo that they are now entirely baniſhed from places which uſed to abound with, and which are ſtill in a ſtate to harbour them, being far removed from the cultivated parts of the country. An annual deficiency of fifteen thouſand has been obſerved in the number of beaver ſkins brought down to Montreal, for the laſt few years.

From Long Iſland I returned to this city; which the hoſpitality and friendly civilities I have experienced, in common with other ſtrangers, from its inhabitants, induce me to rank as the moſt agreeable place I have viſited in the United States: nor am I ſingular in this opinion, there being ſcarcely any traveller I have converſed with, but what gives it the ſame preference. Whilſt I continue in America it ſhall be my place of reſidence: but my thoughts are ſolely bent upon returning to my native land, now dearer to me than ever; and provided that the ice, which threatens at preſent to block up the harbour, does not cut off our communication with the Atlantic, I ſhall

ſpeedily

ſpeedily take my departure from this Continent, well pleaſed at having ſeen as much of it as I have done; but I ſhall leave it without a ſigh, and without entertaining the ſlighteſt wiſh to reviſit it.

FINIS.